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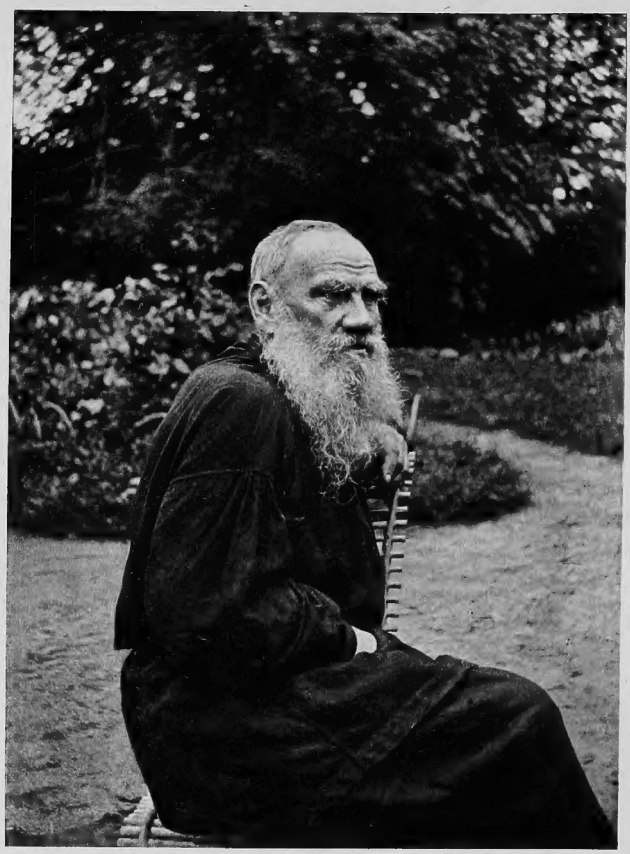

Illustrated Library Edition

HADJI MURAD

Translated by AYLMER MAUDE

THE LIGHT THAT SHINES IN THE DARKNESS

THE MAN WHO WAS DEAD

THE CAUSE OF IT ALL

By

COUNT LEV N. TOLSTÓY

Edited by DR. HAGBERG WRIGHT

NEW YORK
WILLEY BOOK CO.
PUBLISHERS

A.557142

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THE COLONIAL PRESS
C. H. SIMONDS CO., BOSTON, U. S. A.

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HADJI MURÁD

PREFACE

"I AM writing to you specially to say how glad I have been to be your contemporary, and to express my last and sincere request. My friend, return to literary activity! That gift came to you from whence comes all the rest. . . . Great writer of our Russian land, listen to my wish!"

So wrote Turgénev on his deathbed to Tolstoy, when the latter, absorbed in religious struggles and studies, had for five years produced no work of art save one short story.

Nor was it long before the wish was realised, for three years later Tolstoy was writing "The Death of Iván Ilyítch," and that tremendous drama, "The Power of Darkness"; and these were followed by a number of short stories, some plays, a long novel ("Resurrection") and the works now posthumously published. Among these latter a foremost place belongs to "Hadji Murád," in which Tolstoy again tells of that Caucasian life which supplied him with

the matter for some of his earliest tales as well as for his great story "The Cossacks," which Turgénev declared to be "the best story that has been written in our (Russian) language."

The Caucasus indeed offered a rich variety of material on which Tolstoy drew at every stage of his literary career. It was there that, at the age of twenty-three, he first saw war as a volunteer; there he served for two years as a cadet; and there finally he became an officer, before leaving to serve in the Crimean war—which in its turn gave him material for his sketches of "Sevastopol."

In his letters from the Caucasus he often complained of the dulness and emptiness of his life there; yet it certainly attracted him for a while, and was not devoid of stirring and curious incidents.

The most extraordinary of these relates to a gambling debt he incurred and was unable to pay. Having given notes-of-hand, he was in despair when the date of payment approached without his having been able to procure the money needed, and he prayed earnestly to God "to get me out of this disagreeable scrape."

The very next morning he received a letter enclosing his notes-of-hand, which were returned to him as a free gift by a young Chechen named Sado, who had become his *kunák* (devoted friend) and had won them back at cards from the officer who won them from Tolstoy.

It was in company with that same Sado that Tolstoy, when passing from one fort to another, was chased by the enemy and nearly captured.

His life was in imminent danger on another occasion, when a shell, fired by the enemy, smashed the carriage of a cannon he was pointing; but once again he escaped unhurt.

It was during his first year in the Caucasus that Tolstoy began writing for publication. "The Raid," describing the kind of warfare he was witnessing there, was the second of his stories to appear in print. A little later he wrote two other tales dealing with the same subject: "The Wood-Felling," and "Meeting a Moscow Acquaintance in the Detachment."

Feeling that he had not exhausted the material at his disposal, he then planned "The Cossacks: a Caucasian Story of 1852," which he kept on hand unfinished for nearly ten years,

and might not have published even then had he not happened to lose some money at Chinese billiards to a stranger he met at the club in Moscow. To pay this debt, he sold "The Cossacks" for Rs. 1,000 (about £150 in those days) to Katkóv, the well-known publicist and publisher, with whom he subsequently quarrelled. The circumstances under which he had parted with "The Cossacks" were so unpleasant to Tolstoy that he never completed the story.

Ten years later, when he had set his heart on producing an attractive reading-book for children, he wrote the charming little story "A Prisoner in the Caucasus" (one of the gems in "Twenty-three Tales"), founded on the above-mentioned incident of his own narrow escape from capture; and finally, after another thirty years had passed, he drew upon his Caucasian recollections for the last time when he composed "Hadji Murád."

Tolstoy had met Hadji Murád in Tiflis in December 1851,[1] and in a letter addressed to

[1] Writing my "Life of Tolstoy" before I knew the full story of Hadji Murád, I confused him, in the first edition, with some one else, and stated that Tolstoy met him at Karalýk in 1871. On reading my book the Countess Tolstoy

his brother Sergius on the 23rd of that month he wrote,—

"If you wish to show off with news from the Caucasus, you may recount that a certain Hadji Murád (second in importance to Shamil himself) surrendered a few days ago to the Russian Government. He was the leading daredevil and 'brave' of all Chechnya, but has been led into committing a mean action."

The details of Hadji Murád's life as given by Tolstoy in his story are not always historically exact; but the main events are true, and the tale is told in a way that gives a vivid and faithful picture of those stirring times.

Of the struggle for independence carried on in the Caucasus with such desperate bravery for so many years, very little was known to English readers until the publication of Mr. Baddeley's "The Russian Conquest of the Caucasus," which gives an excellent account of that involved, confusing and long drawn-out, but important, contest.

The Caucasus is peopled by so many tribes,

warned me of this mistake, but her warning did not reach me soon enough, and I was only able to put the matter right in a later edition.

differing so much among themselves, and all so strange to Western Europeans, that it is not easy to summarise the history of the conflict in a way at once correct and clear. There are, however, certain main facts which should be borne in mind when reading "Hadji Murád."

As her only possible way of escape from the oppression of Persia on one side and of Turkey on another, Christian Georgia—lying to the south of the Caucasian Mountains—submitted to Russia as long ago as the commencement of the nineteenth century.

Even before that Russia had spasmodically attempted to conquer the northern part of the Caucasus; but from then onwards she had a special incentive to press forward and annex the territories dividing her from Georgia which was already hers.

The internecine feuds of the native tribes generally prevented them from offering a united resistance to Russian aggression; but the dense forests of Chechnya, and the exceedingly mountainous character of Daghestan, rendered the subjugation of those regions a matter of great difficulty.

In addition to the geographical obstacles there was another, due to a strong religious revival which sprang up among the Mohammedan population and, despite the feuds among the tribes, to a considerable extent and for a considerable time united them in a holy war against the infidel Russians.

Like all great religious movements this revival had roots in a distant past. It also had currents, religious and political, which swept now in one direction and now in another.

To begin with, there was a Murid movement which appears to have been almost identical with Sufi'ism, and to have existed from the third century of the Mohammedan era. That movement, going beyond the Shariát (the written law), inculcated the Tarikát (the Path) leading to the higher life. It also proclaimed the equality of all Mussulmans, rich and poor alike, and enjoined temperance, abstinence, self-denial, and the renunciation of the good things of both worlds, that man may make himself "free to receive worthily the love towards God." In Muridism a teacher was called a Murshíd ("one who shows" the way), while a

Murid was a disciple or follower ("one who desires" to find the way).

Such was Muridism for several centuries: a peaceful, religious movement of a highly spiritual character; but within the last few generations the struggle against Russia had given a new quality to the movement, and from being spiritual it had become strongly political.

As early as 1785 Mansúr, a leader of unknown origin, appeared in the Caucasus preaching the Ghazavát, or Holy War, against the infidels; and from 1830 onwards, when Kazi-Mullá, the first Imám (uniting in himself supreme spiritual and temporal power) took the field, Muridism became identified with the fierce struggle for independence carried on by the native tribes against the Russian invaders.

Mansúr and Kazi-Mullá are both mentioned in Tolstoy's story, in which also Hadji Murád tells of the part he took in the execution or assassination of Kazi-Mullá's successor, Hamzád. Shamil, too, who succeeded Hamzád and was the greatest of the Imáms, figures as one of the principal characters in the story.

How little the nature and importance of that

war in the Caucasus was understood by Western Europe is shown by the fact that when the Crimean War broke out—the year after Hadji Murád's death—no serious attempt was made to support or encourage Shamil in the struggle which, even after the conclusion of the Crimean War, he desperately maintained against Russia till his last fortress fell in 1859, and he himself was sent prisoner to Kalúga.

We may be said to owe the existence of this story to the severe illnesses from which Tolstoy suffered in 1901 and 1902, for his sickness kept him in a state in which he found it difficult to work at "What is Religion?" or the other didactic essays he was engaged upon, and by way of relaxation he turned to fiction and produced "Hadji Murád." It is worth noticing that in the fifth chapter of this—one of the last stories he ever wrote—Tolstoy describes a skirmish and a soldier's death in a way that closely reminds one of an incident he had handled in "The Wood Felling," nearly half a century before. He thus, at the outset and at the close of his literary career, told almost the same tale in almost the

same way and with almost the same feeling.

On comparing the Caucasian stories he wrote between the ages of twenty-three and thirty-four with the one he wrote when he was seventy-four, one finds in them all the same wonderfully acute power of observation which seized the characteristic indications both of the inner and the outer life of man; the same retentive memory; the same keen interest in life, and the same discrimination between things sympathised with and things disapproved of, but there is this very noticeable difference: each of the earlier stories contains a character who more or less closely represents Tolstoy himself, through whose eyes everything is seen. "Hadji Murád," on the contrary, is written quite objectively. Before he wrote it Tolstoy had become sure of himself, and felt that he had only to tell the story, and that his judgment of men and of actions would justify itself without his own point of view even needing to be explicitly stated.

In "Hadji Murád," as in all his later writings, Tolstoy makes us feel how repugnant to him were the customary ways of the life we call

"civilised," with its selfishness and self-indulgence, its officialism, banquets, balls, and masquerades, and above all, with its complete lack of spiritual fervour. The manners and customs of the semi-savage tribesmen arouse no such abhorrence in him. The natural instinctive spontaneity of their conduct appeals to him; and throughout the tale he makes us feel that Hadji Murád could not possibly have acted otherwise than as he did, either when he deserted the Russians or when he returned to them, or when he slew his guards and tried once more to escape to the mountains. Hadji Murád held life cheap—his own as well as that of other people; but though he spilt much blood, he never arouses the antipathy we are made to feel for the pedantic, stupid cruelty of Nicholas I.

Especially attractive to Tolstoy is the religious fervour of self-abnegation, and the readiness for self-sacrifice in a great cause, which were so frequently shown by the mountaineers.

We are more closely akin to the men of other lands than we often realise; and lest some one

reading this book should say to himself, "Yes, the Russians are so-and-so, but we are not as they . . ." it may be well to mention that the elder Vorontsóv's mother was an Englishwoman, a Herbert of the Pembroke family. For that fact, and for much else, I am indebted to Mr. J. F. Baddeley, and especially for his version of the song of the blood-feud sung by Khanéfii, which I have borrowed.

The footnotes are not part of the original work, but belong to the translation.

AYLMER MAUDE.

HADJI MURÁD

HADJI MURAD[1]

I

I was returning home by the fields. It was midsummer; the hay harvest was over, and they were just beginning to reap the rye. At that season of the year there is a delightful variety of flowers—red white and pink scented tufty clover; milk-white ox-eye daisies with their bright yellow centres and pleasant spicy smell; yellow honey-scented rape blossoms; tall campanulas with white and lilac bells, tulip-shaped; creeping vetch; yellow red and pink scabious; plantains with faintly-scented neatly-arranged purple, slightly pink-tinged blossoms; cornflowers, bright blue in the sunshine and while still young, but growing paler and redder towards evening or when growing old; and delicate quickly-withering almond-scented dodder flowers. I gathered a large nosegay of these different flowers, and was going home,

[1] Spelt by the Russians Murat. Murad seems the more correct.—Ed.

when I noticed in a ditch, in full bloom, a beautiful thistle plant of the crimson kind, which in our neighbourhood they call "Tartar," and carefully avoid when mowing—or, if they do happen to cut it down, throw out from among the grass for fear of pricking their hands. Thinking to pick this thistle and put it in the centre of my nosegay, I climbed down into the ditch, and, after driving away a velvety humble-bee that had penetrated deep into one of the flowers and had there fallen sweetly asleep, I set to work to pluck the flower. But this proved a very difficult task. Not only did the stalk prick on every side—even through the handkerchief I wrapped round my hand—but it was so tough that I had to struggle with it for nearly five minutes, breaking the fibres one by one; and when I had at last plucked it, the stalk was all frayed, and the flower itself no longer seemed so fresh and beautiful. Moreover, owing to its coarseness and stiffness, it did not seem in place among the delicate blossoms of my nosegay. I felt sorry to have vainly destroyed a flower that looked beautiful in its proper place, and I threw it away.

"But what energy and tenacity! With what determination it defended itself, and how dearly it sold its life!" thought I to myself, recollecting the effort it had cost me to pluck the flower. The way home led across black-earth fields that had just been ploughed up. I ascended the dusty path. The ploughed field belonged to a landed proprietor, and was so large that on both sides and before me to the top of the hill nothing was visible but evenly furrowed and moist earth. The land was well tilled, and nowhere was there a blade of grass or any kind of plant to be seen; it was all black. "Ah, what a destructive creature is man. . . . How many different plant-lives he destroys to support his own existence!" thought I, involuntarily looking round for some living thing in this lifeless black field. In front of me, to the right of the road, I saw some kind of little clump, and drawing nearer I found it was the same kind of thistle as that which I had vainly plucked and thrown away. This "Tartar" plant had three branches. One was broken, and stuck out like the stump of a mutilated arm. Each of the other two bore a

flower, once red but now blackened. One stalk was broken and half of it hung down with a soiled flower at its tip. The other, though also soiled with black mud, still stood erect. Evidently a cartwheel had passed over the plant, but it had risen again and that was why, though erect, it stood twisted to one side, as if a piece of its body had been torn from it, its bowels had been drawn out, an arm torn off, and one of its eyes plucked out; and yet it stood firm and did not surrender to man, who had destroyed all its brothers around it. . . .

"What energy!" I thought. "Man has conquered everything, and destroyed millions of plants, yet this one won't submit." And I remembered a Caucasian episode of years ago, which I had partly seen myself, partly heard of from eye-witnesses, and in part imagined.

The episode, as it has taken shape in my memory and imagination, was as follows.

. . . . .

This happened towards the end of 1851.

On a cold November evening Hadji Murád rode into Makhmet, a hostile Chechen *aoul*,[2]

[2] *Aoul*, Tartar village.

that was filled with the scented smoke of burning *kizyák,*[3] and that lay some fifteen miles from Russian territory. The strained chant of the muezzin had just ceased, and through the clear mountain air, impregnated with *kizyák* smoke, above the lowing of the cattle and the bleating of the sheep that were dispersing among the *sáklyas*[4] (which were crowded together like the cells of a honeycomb), could be clearly heard the guttural voices of disputing men, and sounds of women's and children's voices rising from near the fountain below.

This was Hadji Murád, Shamil's *naïb,*[5] famous for his exploits, who used never to ride out without his banner, and was always accompanied by some dozens of *murids,* who caracoled and showed off before him. Now, with one *murid* only, wrapped in hood and *búrka,*[6] from under which protruded a rifle, he rode, a fugitive, trying to attract as little attention as possible, and peering with his quick black eyes into the faces of those he met on his way.

[3] *Kizyák,* fuel made of straw and manure.

[4] *Sáklya,* a Caucasian house, clay plastered and often built of earth.

[5] *Naïb,* lieutenant or governor.

[6] *Búrka,* a long, round felt cape.

When he entered the *aoul,* Hadji Murád did not ride up the road leading to the open square, but turned to the left into a narrow side street; and on reaching the second *sáklya,* which was cut into the hillside, he stopped and looked round. There was no one under the penthouse in front; but on the roof of the *sáklya* itself, behind the freshly-plastered clay chimney, lay a man covered with a sheepskin. Hadji Murád touched him with the handle of his leather-plaited whip, and clicked his tongue. An old man rose from under the sheepskin. He had on a greasy old *beshmét*[7] and a nightcap. His moist red eyelids had no lashes, and he blinked to get them unstuck. Hadji Murád, repeating the customary *"Selaam aleikum!"* uncovered his face. *"Aleikum, selaam!"* said the old man, recognising Hadji Murád and smiling with his toothless mouth; and rising up on his thin legs, he began thrusting his feet into the wooden-heeled slippers that stood by the chimney. Then he leisurely slipped his arms into the sleeves of his crumpled sheepskin, and going to the ladder that leant against the roof, he

[7] *Beshmét,* a Tartar undergarment with sleeves.

descended backwards. While he dressed, and as he climbed down, he kept shaking his head on its thin, shrivelled sunburnt neck, and mumbling something with his toothless mouth. As soon as he reached the ground he hospitably seized Hadji Murád's bridle and right stirrup; but the strong, active *murid* who accompanied Hadji Murád had quickly dismounted and, motioning the old man aside, took his place. Hadji Murád also dismounted and, walking with a slight limp, entered under the penthouse. A boy of fifteen, coming quickly out of the door, met him and wonderingly fixed his sparkling eyes, black as ripe sloes, on the new arrivals.

"Run to the mosque and call your father," ordered the old man, as he hurried forward to open the thin, creaking door into the *sáklya* for Hadji Murád.

As Hadji Murád entered the outer door, a slight spare middle-aged woman in a yellow smock, red *beshmét,* and wide blue trousers came through an inner door carrying cushions.

"May thy coming bring happiness!" said she, and, bending nearly double, began arrang-

ing the cushions along the front wall for the guest to sit on.

"May thy sons live!" answered Hadji Murád, taking off his *bûrka,* his rifle and his sword and handing them to the old man, who carefully hung the rifle and sword on a nail beside the weapons of the master of the house, which were suspended between two large basins that glittered against the clean clay-plastered and carefully whitewashed wall.

Hadji Murád adjusted the pistol at his back, came up to the cushions and, wrapping his Circassian coat closer round him, sat down. The old man squatted on his bare heels beside him, closed his eyes, and lifted his hands, palms upwards. Hadji Murád did the same; then, after repeating a prayer, they both stroked their faces, passing their hands downwards till the palms joined at the end of their beards.

"*Ne habar?*" asked Hadji Murád, addressing the old man. (That is, "Is there anything new?")

"*Habar yok*" ("nothing new"), replied the old man, looking with his lifeless red eyes not at Hadji Murád's face but at his breast. "I

live at the apiary, and have only to-day come to see my son. . . . He knows."

Hadji Murád, understanding that the old man did not wish to say what he knew and what Hadji Murád wanted to know, slightly nodded his head and asked no more questions.

"There is no good news," said the old man. "The only news is that the hares keep discussing how to drive away the eagles; and the eagles tear first one and then another of them. The other day the Russian dogs burnt the hay in the Mitchit *aoul*. . . . May their faces be torn!" added he, hoarsely and angrily.

Hadji Murád's *murid* entered the room, his strong legs striding softly over the earthen floor. Retaining only his dagger and pistol, he shook off his *búrka,* rifle and sword as Hadji Murád had done, and hung them up on the same nails with his leader's weapons.

"Who is he?" asked the old man, pointing to the newcomer.

"My *murid.* Eldár is his name," said Hadji Murád.

"That is well," said the old man, and motioned Eldár to a place on a piece of felt beside

Hadji Murád. Eldár sat down, crossing his legs, and fixing his fine ram-like eyes on the old man, who, having now started talking, was telling how their brave fellows had caught two Russian soldiers the week before, and had killed one and sent the other to Shamil in Vedén.

Hadji Murád heard him absently, looking at the door and listening to the sounds outside. Under the penthouse steps were heard, the door creaked, and Sado, the master of the house, came in. He was a man of about forty, with a small beard, long nose, and eyes as black, though not as glittering, as those of his fifteen-year-old son who had run to call him home, and who now entered with his father and sat down by the door. The master of the house took off his wooden slippers at the door, and pushing his old and much-worn cap on to the back of his head (which had remained unshaved so long that it was beginning to be overgrown with black hair), at once squatted down in front of Hadji Murád.

He too lifted his hands, palms upwards, as the old man had done, repeated a prayer, and then stroked his face downwards. Only after

that did he begin to speak. He told how an order had come from Shamil to seize Hadji Murád, alive or dead; that Shamil's envoys had left only the day before; that the people were afraid to disobey Shamil's orders; and that therefore it was necessary to be careful.

"In my house," said Sado, "no one shall injure my *kunák*[8] while I live; but how will it be in the open fields? . . . We must think it over."

Hadji Murád listened with attention and nodded approvingly. When Sado had finished he said,—

"Very well. Now we must send a man with a letter to the Russians. My *murid* will go, but he will need a guide."

"I will send brother Bata," said Sado. "Go and call Bata," he added, turning to his son.

The boy instantly bounded to his nimble feet as if he were on springs, and swinging his arms, rapidly left the *sáklya*. Some ten minutes later he returned with a sinewy, short-legged Chechen, burnt almost black by the sun, wearing a worn and tattered yellow Circassian

[8] *Kunák*, sworn friend, guest.

coat with frayed sleeves, and crumpled black leggings.

Hadji Murád greeted the newcomer, and at once, and again without wasting a single word, asked,—

"Canst thou conduct my *murid* to the Russians?"

"I can," gaily replied Bata. "I can certainly do it. There is not another Chechen who would pass as I can. Another might agree to go, and might promise anything, but would do nothing; but I can do it!"

"All right," said Hadji Murád. "Thou wilt receive three for thy trouble," and he held up three fingers.

Bata nodded to show that he understood, and added that it was not money he prized, but that he was ready to serve Hadji Murád for the honour alone. Every one in the mountains knew Hadji Murád, and how he slew the Russian swine.

"Very well. . . . a rope should be long, but a speech short," said Hadji Murád.

"Well, then, I'll hold my tongue," said Bata.

"Where the river Argun bends by the cliff,"

said Hadji Murád, "there are two stacks in a glade in the forest—thou knowest?"

"I know."

"There my four horsemen are waiting for me," said Hadji Murád.

"Aye," answered Bata, nodding.

"Ask for Khan Mahomá. He knows what to do and what to say. Canst thou lead him to the Russian commander, Prince Vorontsóv?"

"I'll take him there."

"Take him, and bring him back again. Canst thou?"

"I can."

"Take him there, and return to the wood. I shall be there too."

"I will do it all," said Bata, rising, and putting his hands on his heart he went out.

Hadji Murád turned to his host when Bata had gone.

"A man must also be sent to Chekhi," he began, and took hold of one of the cartridge pouches of his Circassian coat, but immediately let his hand drop and became silent on seeing two women enter the *sáklya*.

One was Sado's wife—the thin middle-aged

woman who had arranged the cushions for Hadji Murád. The other was quite a young girl, wearing red trousers and a green *beshmét;* a necklace of silver coins covered the whole front of her dress, and at the end of the not long but thick plait of hard black hair that hung between her thin shoulder-blades a silver rouble was suspended. Her eyes, as sloe black as those of her father and brother, sparkled brightly in her young face, which tried to be stern. She did not look at the visitors, but evidently felt their presence.

Sado's wife brought in a low round table, on which stood tea, pancakes in butter, cheese, *churek* (that is, thinly rolled out bread), and honey. The girl carried a basin, a ewer, and a towel.

Sado and Hadji Murád kept silent as long as the women, with their coin ornaments tinkling, moved softly about in their red soft-soled slippers, setting out before the visitors the things they had brought. Eldár sat motionless as a statue, his ram-like eyes fixed on his crossed legs, all the time the women were in the *sáklya.* Only after they had gone, and their soft foot-

steps could no longer be heard behind the door, did he give a sigh of relief.

Hadji Murád having pulled out a bullet that plugged one of the bullet-pouches of his Circassian coat, and having taken out a rolled-up note that lay beneath it, held it out, saying,—

"To be handed to my son."

"Where must the answer be sent?"

"To thee, and thou must forward it to me."

"It shall be done," said Sado, and placed the note in a cartridge-pocket of his own coat. Then he took up the metal ewer and moved the basin towards Hadji Murád.

Hadji Murád turned up the sleeves of his *beshmét* on his white muscular arms, and held out his hands under the clear cold water which Sado poured from the ewer. Having wiped them on a clean unbleached towel, Hadji Murád turned to the table. Eldár did the same. While the visitors ate, Sado sat opposite, and thanked them several times for their visit. The boy sat by the door, never taking his sparkling eyes off Hadji Murád's face, and smiled as if in confirmation of his father's words.

Though Hadji Murád had eaten nothing for

more than twenty-four hours, he ate only a little bread and cheese; then, drawing out a small knife from under his dagger, he spread some honey on a piece of bread.

"Our honey is good," said the old man, evidently pleased to see Hadji Murád eating his honey. "This year, above all other years, it is plentiful and good."

"I thank thee," said Hadji Murád, and turned from the table. Eldár would have liked to go on eating, but he followed his leader's example, and, having moved away from the table, handed Hadji Murád the ewer and basin.

Sado knew that he was risking his life by receiving Hadji Murád in his house, as, after his quarrel with Shamil, the latter had issued a proclamation to all the inhabitants of Chechnya forbidding them to receive Hadji Murád on pain of death. He knew that the inhabitants of the *aoul* might at any moment become aware of Hadji Murád's presence in his house, and might demand his surrender; but this not only did not frighten Sado, but even gave him pleasure. He considered it his duty to protect his guest though it should cost him his

life, and he was proud and pleased with himself because he was doing his duty.

"Whilst thou art in my house and my head is on my shoulders no one shall harm thee," he repeated to Hadji Murád.

Hadji Murád looked into his glittering eyes, and understanding that this was true, said with some solemnity,—

"Mayest thou receive joy and life!"

Sado silently laid his hand on his heart as a sign of thanks for these kind words.

Having closed the shutters of the *sáklya* and laid some sticks in the fireplace, Sado, in an exceptionally bright and animated mood, left the room and went into that part of his *sáklya* where his family all lived. The women had not yet gone to sleep, and were talking about the dangerous visitors who were spending the night in their guest-chamber.

II

At the advanced fort Vozdvízhensk, situated some ten miles from the *aoul* in which Hadji Murád was spending the night, three soldiers and a non-commissioned officer left the fortifications and went beyond the Shahgirínsk Gate. The soldiers, dressed as Caucasian soldiers used to be in those days, wore sheepskin coats and caps, and boots that reached above their knees, and they carried their cloaks tightly rolled up and fastened across their shoulders. Shouldering arms, they first went some five hundred paces along the road, and then turned off it and went some twenty paces to the right—the dead leaves rustling under their boots—till they reached the blackened trunk of a broken plane tree, just visible through the darkness. There they stopped. It was at this plane tree that an ambush party was usually placed.

The bright stars, that seemed to be running along the tree-tops while the soldiers were walking through the forest, now stood still,

shining brightly between the bare branches of the trees.

"A good job it's dry," said the non-commissioned officer, Panóv, bringing down his long gun and bayonet with a clang from his shoulder, and placing it against the plane tree. The three soldiers did the same.

"Sure enough, I've lost it!" crossly muttered Panóv. "Must have left it behind, or I've dropped it on the way."

"What are you looking for?" asked one of the soldiers in a bright, cheerful voice.

"The bowl of my pipe. Where the devil has it got to?"

"Have you the stem?" asked the cheerful voice.

"Here's the stem."

"Then why not stick it straight into the ground?"

"Not worth bothering!"

"We'll manage that in a minute."

It was forbidden to smoke while in ambush, but this ambush hardly deserved the name. It was rather an outpost to prevent the mountaineers from bringing up a cannon unobserved

and firing at the fort as they used to do. Panóv did not consider it necessary to forego the pleasure of smoking, and therefore accepted the cheerful soldier's offer. The latter took a knife from his pocket and dug with it a hole in the ground. Having smoothed this round, he adjusted the pipe-stem to it, then filled the hole with tobacco and pressed it down; and the pipe was ready. A sulphur match flared and for a moment lit up the broad-cheeked face of the soldier who lay on his stomach. The air whistled in the stem, and Panóv smelt the pleasant odour of burning tobacco.

"Fixed it up?" said he, rising to his feet.

"Why, of course!"

"What a smart chap you are, Avdéev! . . . As wise as a judge! Now then, lad."

Avdéev rolled over on his side to make room for Panóv, letting smoke escape from his mouth.

Panóv lay down prone, and, after wiping the mouthpiece with his sleeve, began to inhale.

When they had had their smoke the soldiers began to talk.

"They say the commander has had his fin-

gers in the cash-box again," remarked one of them in a lazy voice. "He lost at cards, you see."

"He'll pay it back again," said Panóv.

"Of course he will! He's a good officer," assented Avdéev.

"Good! good!" gloomily repeated the man who had started the conversation. "In my opinion the company ought to speak to him. 'If you've taken the money, tell us how much and when you'll repay it.' "

"That will be as the company decides," said Panóv, tearing himself away from the pipe.

"Of course. 'The community is a strong man,' " assented Avdéev, quoting a proverb.

"There will be oats to buy and boots to get towards spring. The money will be wanted, and what if he's pocketed it?" insisted the dissatisfied one.

"I tell you it will be as the company wishes," repeated Panóv. "It's not the first time: he takes, and gives back."

In the Caucasus in those days each company chose men to manage its own commissariat. They received 6 roubles 50 kopeks a month per

man[1] from the treasury, and catered for the company. They planted cabbages, made hay, had their own carts, and prided themselves on their well-fed horses. The company's money was kept in a chest, of which the commander had the key; and it often happened that he borrowed from the chest. This had just happened again, and that was what the soldiers were talking about. The morose soldier, Nikítin, wished to demand an account from the commander, while Panóv and Avdéev considered it unnecessary.

After Panóv, Nikítin had a smoke; and then, spreading his cloak on the ground, sat down on it, leaning against the trunk of the plane tree. The soldiers were silent. Only far above their heads the crowns of the trees rustled in the wind. Suddenly, above this incessant low rustling, rose the howling whining weeping and chuckling of jackals.

"Hear those accursed creatures—how they caterwaul!"

"They're laughing at you because your mug's

[1] About £1, for at that time the rouble was worth about three shillings.

all on one side," remarked the high voice of another soldier, a Little Russian.

All was silent again: only the wind swayed the branches, now revealing and now hiding the stars.

"I say, Panóv," suddenly asked the cheerful Avdéev, "do you ever feel dull?"

"Dull, why?" replied Panóv reluctantly.

"Well, I do feel dull . . . so dull sometimes that I don't know what I might not be ready to do to myself."

"There now!" was all Panóv replied.

"That time when I drank all the money, it was from dulness. It took hold of me . . . took hold of me till I thinks to myself, 'I'll just get blind drunk!' "

"But sometimes drinking makes it still worse."

"Yes, that's happened to me too. But what is one to do with oneself?"

"But what makes you feel so dull?"

"What, me? . . . Why, it's the longing for home."

"Is yours a wealthy home, then?"

"No, we weren't wealthy, but things went

properly—we lived well." And Avdéev began to relate what he had already many times told to Panóv.

"You see, I went as a soldier of my own free will, instead of my brother," he said. "He has children. They were five in family, and I had only just married. Mother began begging me to go. So I thought, 'Well, maybe they will remember what I've done.' So I went to our proprietor . . . he was a good master, and he said, 'You're a fine fellow, go!' So I went instead of my brother."

"Well, that was right," said Panóv.

"And yet, will you believe me, Panóv, if I now feel so dull, it's chiefly because of that? 'Why did you go instead of your brother?' I say. 'He's now living like a king over there, while I have to suffer here;' and the more I think the worse I feel. . . . Seems it's just a piece of ill-luck!"

Avdéev was silent.

"Perhaps we'd better have another smoke," said he after a pause.

"Well then, fix it up!"

But the soldiers were not to have their smoke.

Hardly had Avdéev risen to fix the pipe-stem in its place when above the rustling of the trees they heard footsteps along the road. Panóv took his gun, and pushed Nikítin with his foot.

Nikítin rose and picked up his cloak.

The third soldier, Bondarénko, rose also, and said,—

"And I have just dreamt such a dream, mates. . . ."

"Sh!" said Avdéev, and the soldiers held their breath, listening. The footsteps of men not shod in hard boots were heard approaching. Clearer and clearer through the darkness was heard a rustling of the fallen leaves and dry twigs. Then came the peculiar guttural tones of Chechen voices. The soldiers now not only heard, but saw two shadows passing through a clear space between the trees. One shadow was taller than the other. When these shadows had come in line with the soldiers, Panóv, gun in hand, stepped out on to the road, followed by his comrades.

"Who goes there?" cried he.

"Me, friendly Chechen," said the shorter

one. This was Bata. "Gun, *yok!*[2] . . . sword, *yok!*" said he, pointing to himself. "Prince, want!"

The taller one stood silent beside his comrade. He, too, was unarmed.

"He means he's a scout, and wants the colonel," explained Panóv to his comrades.

"Prince Vorontsóv . . . much want! Big business!" said Bata.

"All right, all right! We'll take you to him," said Panóv. "I say, you'd better take them," said he to Avdéev, "you and Bondarénko; and when you've given them up to the officer on duty come back again. Mind," he added, "be careful to make them keep in front of you!"

"And what of this?" said Avdéev, moving his gun and bayonet as though stabbing some one. "I'd just give a dig, and let the steam out of him!"

"What'll he be worth when you've stuck him?" remarked Bondarénko.

"Now, march!"

When the steps of the two soldiers conduct-

[2] *Yok*, no, not.

ing the scouts could no longer be heard, Panóv and Nikítin returned to their post.

"What the devil brings them here at night?" said Nikítin.

"Seems it's necessary," said Panóv. "But it's getting chilly," he added, and, unrolling his cloak, he put it on and sat down by the tree.

About two hours later Avdéev and Bondarénko returned.

"Well, have you handed them over?"

"Yes. They're not yet asleep at the colonel's—they were taken straight in to him. And do you know, mates, those shaven-headed lads are fine?" continued Avdéev. "Yes, really? What a talk I had with them!"

"Of course you'd talk," remarked Nikítin disapprovingly.

"Really, they're just like Russians. One of them is married. 'Molly,' says I, '*bar?*'[3] '*Bar,*' he says. Bondarénko, didn't I say '*bar?*' 'Many *bar?*' 'A couple,' says he. A couple! Such a good talk we had! Such nice fellows!"

"Nice, indeed!" said Nikítin. "If you met him alone he'd soon let the guts out of you."

[3] *Bar*, have.

"It will be getting light before long," said Panóv.

"Yes, the stars are beginning to go out," said Avdéev, sitting down and making himself comfortable.

And the soldiers were again silent.

III

The windows of the barracks and of the soldiers' houses had long been dark in the fort; but there was still light in the windows of the best house there.

In it lived Prince Simon Mikhailovich Vorontsóv, commander of the Kurín Regiment, an imperial aide-de-camp, and son of the commander-in-chief. Vorontsóv lived with his wife, Mary Vasílevna, a famous Petersburg beauty, and lived in this little Caucasian fort more luxuriously than any one had ever lived there before. To Vorontsóv, and especially to his wife, it seemed that they were not only living a very modest life, but one full of privations; while to the inhabitants of the place their luxury was surprising and extraordinary.

Now at midnight, in the spacious drawing-room with its carpeted floor, its rich curtains drawn across the windows, at a card table lit by four candles, sat the hosts and their visitors, playing cards. One of the players was

Vorontsóv himself: a long-faced, fair-haired colonel, wearing the initials and gold cords of an aide-de-camp. His partner—a graduate of Petersburg University, whom the Princess Vorontsóv had lately had sent out as tutor to her little son (born of her first marriage)—was a shaggy young man of gloomy appearance. Against them played two officers: one a broad and red-faced man, Poltorátsky, a company commander, who had exchanged out of the guards; and the other, the regimental adjutant, a man with a cold expression on his handsome face, who sat very straight on his chair.

The princess, Mary Vasílevna, the large-built large-eyed and black-browed beauty, sat beside Poltorátsky (her crinoline touching his legs) and looked over his cards. In her words, her looks, and her smile, in her perfume and in every movement of her body, there was something that reduced Poltorátsky to obliviousness of everything except a consciousness of her nearness; and he made blunder after blunder, trying his partner's temper more and more.

"No . . . that's too bad! You've again wasted an ace," said the regimental Adjutant,

flushing all over, as Poltorátsky threw out an ace.

Poltorátsky uncomprehendingly—as though he had just awoke—turned his kindly, wide-set black eyes towards the dissatisfied Adjutant.

"Do forgive him!" said Mary Vasílevna, smiling. "There, you see? Didn't I tell you so?" she went on, turning to Poltorátsky.

"But that's not at all what you said," replied Poltorátsky, smiling.

"Wasn't it?" she replied, also smiling; and this answering smile excited and delighted Poltorátsky to such a degree that he blushed crimson, and seizing the cards began to shuffle.

"It isn't your turn to deal," said the Adjutant sternly, and with his white ringed hand he himself began to deal as though he only wished to get rid of the cards as quickly as possible.

The Prince's valet entered the drawing-room, and announced that the officer on duty wanted the Prince.

"Excuse me, gentlemen," said the Prince, speaking Russian with an English accent. "Will you take my place, Marie?"

"Do you all agree?" asked the Princess, rising quickly and lightly to her full height, rustling with her silks, and smiling the radiant smile of a happy woman.

"I always agree to everything," replied the Adjutant, very pleased that the Princess—who could not play at all—was now going to play against him.

Poltorátsky only spread out his hands and smiled.

The rubber was nearly finished when the Prince returned to the drawing-room. He came back animated and very pleased.

"Do you know what I propose?"

"What is it?"

"Let us have some champagne."

"I am always ready for that," said Poltorátsky.

"Why not? We shall be delighted!" said the Adjutant.

"Vasíly! bring some!" said the Prince.

"What did they want you for?" asked Mary Vasílevna.

"It was the officer on duty, and another man."

"Who? What about?" asked Mary Vasílevna quickly.

"I mustn't say," said Vorontsóv, shrugging his shoulders.

"You mustn't say!" repeated Mary Vasilevna. "We'll see about that."

When the champagne was brought, each of the visitors drank a glass; and, having finished the game and settled the scores, they began to take their leave.

"Is it your company that's ordered to the forest to-morrow?" the Prince asked Poltorátsky as they said good-bye.

"Yes, mine . . . why?"

"Oh, then we'll meet to-morrow," said the Prince, slightly smiling.

"Very pleased," replied Poltorátsky, not quite understanding what Vorontsóv was saying to him, and preoccupied only by the thought that he would in a minute be pressing Mary Vasílevna's hand.

Mary Vasílevna, according to her wont, not only firmly pressed his hand, but shook it vigorously; and again reminding him of his mistake in playing diamonds, she gave him what

appeared to Poltorátsky to be a delightful affectionate and meaning smile.

Poltorátsky went home in an ecstatic condition only to be understood by people like himself who, having grown up and been educated in society, meet a woman belonging to their own circle after months of isolated military life, and, moreover, a woman like the Princess Vorontsóv.

When he reached the little house in which he and his comrade lived he pushed the door, but it was locked. He knocked, but still the door was not opened. He felt vexed, and began banging the door with his foot and his sword. Then he heard a sound of footsteps, and Vovílo —a domestic serf belonging to Poltorátsky— undid the cabin-hook which fastened the door.

"What do you mean by locking yourself in, blockhead?"

"But how is it possible, sir . . . ?"

"You're tipsy again! I'll show you how 'it is possible!'" and Poltorátsky was about to strike Vovílo, but changed his mind. "Well, go to the devil! . . . Light a candle."

"In a minute."

Vovílo was really tipsy. He had been drinking at the Name's-Day party of the ordnance-sergeant. On returning home he began comparing his life with that of the latter, Iván Petróvich. Iván Petróvich had a salary, was married, and hoped in a year's time to get his discharge.

Vovílo had been taken "up" when a boy; that is, he had been taken into his owner's household service; and now he was already over forty, was not married, and lived a campaigning life with his harum-scarum young master. He was a good master, who seldom struck him; but what kind of a life was it? "He promised to free me when we return from the Caucasus, but where am I to go with my freedom? . . . It's a dog's life!" thought Vovílo; and he felt so sleepy that, afraid lest some one should come in and steal something, he fastened the hook of the door and fell asleep.

. . . . .

Poltorátsky entered his bedroom, which he shared with his comrade Tíkhonof.

"Well, have you lost?" asked Tíkhonof, waking up.

"As it happens, I've not. I've won seventeen roubles, and we drank a bottle of Cliquot!"

"And you've looked at Mary Vasílevna?"

"Yes, and I've looked at Mary Vasílevna," repeated Poltorátsky.

"It will soon be time to get up," said Tíkhonof. "We are to start at six."

"Vovílo!" shouted Poltorátsky, "see that you wake me up properly to-morrow at five!"

"How's one to wake you, if you fight?"

"I tell you you're to wake me! Do you hear?"

"All right." Vovílo went out, taking Poltorátsky's boots and clothes with him. Poltorátsky got into bed, and smiling, smoked a cigarette and put out his candle. In the dark he saw before him the smiling face of Mary Vasílevna.

. . . . .

The Vorontsóvs did not go to bed at once. When the visitors had left, Mary Vasílevna went up to her husband, and standing in front of him, said severely,—

"Eh bien! Vous allez me dire ce que c'est." [1]

"Mais, ma chère."

"Pas de 'ma chère'! C'était un émissaire, n'est ce pas?"

"Quand même, je ne puis pas vous le dire."

"Vous ne pouvez pas? Alors, c'est moi qui vais vous le dire!"

"Vous?"

"It was Hadji Murád, wasn't it?" said Mary Vasílevna, who had for some days past heard of the negotiations, and thought that Hadji Murád himself had been to see her husband. Vorontsóv could not altogether deny this, but disappointed her by saying that it was not Hadji Murád himself but only an emissary to announce that Hadji Murád would come to meet him next day, at the spot where a wood-cutting expedition had been arranged.

In the monotonous life of the fortress, the

[1] "Well, now! You're going to tell me what it's all about . . ."
"But, my dear . . ."
"Don't 'my dear' me! It was an emissary, wasn't it?"
"Well, supposing it was, still I must not tell you."
"You must not? Well, then, it's I who will tell you . . ."
"You?"

young Vorontsóvs—both husband and wife—were glad of this occurrence; and when, after speaking of the pleasure the news would give his father, they went to bed, it was already past two o'clock.

IV

After the three sleepless nights he had passed flying from the *murids* Shamil sent to capture him, Hadji Murád fell asleep as soon as Sado, having bid him good-night, had gone out of the *sáklya*. He slept fully dressed, with his head on his hand, his elbow sinking deep into the red down-cushions his host had arranged for him.

At a little distance, by the wall, slept Eldár. He lay on his back, his strong young limbs stretched out so that his high chest with the black cartridge-pouches sewn into the front of his white Circassian coat was higher than his freshly-shaven blue-gleaming head, which had rolled off the pillow and was thrown back. His upper lip, on which a little soft down was just appearing, pouted like a child's, now contracting and now expanding, as though he were sipping something. He, like Hadji Murád, slept with pistol and dagger in his belt. The

sticks in the grate burnt low, and a nightlight in the niche in the wall gleamed faintly.

In the middle of the night the floor of the guest-chamber creaked, and Hadji Murád immediately rose, putting his hand to his pistol. Sado entered treading softly on the earthen floor.

"What is it?" asked Hadji Murád, as if he had not been asleep at all.

"We must think," replied Sado, squatting down in front of him. "A woman from her roof saw you arrive, and told her husband; and now the whole *aoul* knows. A neighbour has just been to tell my wife that the Elders have assembled in the mosque, and want to detain you."

"I must be off!" said Hadji Murád.

"The horses are saddled," said Sado, quickly leaving the *sáklya*.

"Eldár!" whispered Hadji Murád; and Eldár, hearing his name, and above all his master's voice, leapt to his feet, setting straight his cap.

Hadji Murád donned his weapons and then his *búrka*. Eldár did the same; and they both

went silently out of the *sáklya* into the pent-house. The black-eyed boy brought their horses. Hearing the clatter of hoofs on the hard beaten road, some one stuck his head out of the door of a neighbourng *sáklya,* and, clattering with his wooden shoes, a man ran up the hill towards the mosque. There was no moon, but the stars shone brightly in the black sky, so that the outlines of the *sáklya* roofs could be seen in the darkness, and rising above the other buildings, the mosque with its minarets in the upper part of the village. From the mosque came a hum of voices.

Hadji Murád, quickly seizing his gun, placed his foot in the narrow stirrup, and, silently and easily throwing his body across, swung himself on to the high cushion of the saddle.

"May God reward you!" he said, addressing his host, while his right foot felt instinctively for the stirrup, and with his whip he lightly touched the lad who held his horse, as a sign that he should let go. The boy stepped aside; and the horse, as if it knew what it had to do, started at a brisk pace down the lane towards the principal street. Eldár rode be-

hind him. Sado in his sheepskin followed almost running, swinging his arms, and crossing now to one side and now to the other of the narrow side-street. At the place where the streets met, first one moving shadow and then another appeared in the road.

"Stop . . . who's that? Stop!" shouted a voice, and several men blocked the path.

Instead of stopping, Hadji Murád drew his pistol from his belt, and increasing his speed rode straight at those who blocked the way. They separated, and Hadji Murád without looking round started down the road at a swift canter. Eldár followed him at a sharp trot. Two shots cracked behind them, and two bullets whistled past without hitting either Hadji Murád or Eldár. Hadji Murád continued riding at the same pace, but having gone some three hundred yards, he stopped his slightly panting horse, and listened.

In front of him, lower down, gurgled rapidly running water. Behind him, in the *aoul,* cocks crowed, answering one another. Above these sounds he heard behind him the approaching tramp of horses, and the voices of several men.

Hadji Murád touched his horse and rode on at an even pace. Those behind him galloped and soon overtook him. They were some twenty mounted men, inhabitants of the *aoul,* who had decided to detain Hadji Murád, or at least to make a show of detaining him in order to justify themselves in Shamil's eyes. When they came near enough to be seen in the darkness, Hadji Murád stopped, let go his bridle, and with an accustomed movement of his left hand unbuttoned the cover of his rifle, which he drew forth with his right. Eldár did the same.

"What do you want?" cried Hadji Murád. "Do you wish to take me! . . . Take me, then!" and he raised his rifle. The men from the *aoul* stopped, and Hadji Murád, rifle in hand, rode down into the ravine. The mounted men followed him, but did not draw any nearer. When Hadji Murád had crossed to the other side of the ravine, the men shouted to him that he should hear what they had to say. In reply he fired his rifle and put his horse to a gallop. When he reined it in, his pursuers were no longer within hearing, and the crowing of the cocks could also no longer be heard; only

the murmur of the water in the forest sounded more distinctly, and now and then came the cry of an owl. The black wall of forest appeared quite close. It was in this forest that his *murids* awaited him.

On reaching it Hadji Murád paused, and drawing much air into his lungs, he whistled and then listened silently. The next minute he was answered by a similar whistle from the forest. Hadji Murád turned from the road and entered it. When he had gone about a hundred paces, he saw among the trunks of the trees a bonfire, and the shadows of some men sitting round it, and, half lit-up by the fire-light, a hobbled horse which was saddled. Four men were seated by the fire.

One of them rose quickly, and coming up to Hadji Murád took hold of his bridle and stirrup. This was Hadji Murád's sworn brother, who managed his household affairs for him.

"Put out the fire," said Hadji Murád, dismounting.

The men began scattering the pile, and trampling on the burning branches.

"Has Bata been here?" asked Hadji Murád, moving towards a *búrka* that was spread on the ground.

"Yes, he went away long ago, with Khan Mahomá."

"Which way did they go?"

"That way," answered Khanéfi, pointing in the opposite direction to that from which Hadji Murád had come.

"All right," said Hadji Murád, and unslinging his rifle he began to load it.

"We must take care—I have been pursued," said Hadji Murád to a man who was putting out the fire.

He was Gamzálo, a Chechen. Gamzálo approached the *búrka,* took up a rifle that lay on it wrapped in its cover, and without a word went to that side of the glade from which Hadji Murád had come.

Eldár, when he had dismounted, took Hadji Murád's horse; and having reined up both horses' heads high, tied them to two trees. Then he shouldered his rifle, as Gamzálo had done, and went to the other side of the glade. The bonfire was extinguished, the forest no

longer looked so black as before, and in the sky the stars shone, though but faintly.

Lifting his eyes to the stars, and seeing that the Pleiades had already risen half-way up the sky, Hadji Murád calculated that it must be long past midnight, and that his nightly prayer was long overdue. He asked Khanéfi for a ewer (they always carried one in their packs), and putting on his *búrka* he went to the water.

Having taken off his shoes and performed his ablutions, Hadji Murád stepped on to the *búrka* with bare feet, and then squatted down on his calves, and having first placed his fingers in his ears and closed his eyes, he turned to the south and recited the usual prayer.

When he had finished he returned to the place where the saddle-bags lay, and sitting down on the *búrka* he leant his elbows on his knees and bowed his head, and fell into deep thought.

Hadji Murád always had great faith in his own fortune. When planning anything he felt in advance firmly convinced of success, and fate smiled on him. It was so, with a few rare exceptions, during the whole course of his stormy military life; and so he hoped it would

be now. He pictured to himself how—with the army Vorontsóv would place at his disposal—he would march against Shamil and take him prisoner, and revenge himself on him; and how the Russian Tsar would reward him, and he would again rule over not only Avaria, but also over the whole of Chechnya, which would submit to him. With these thoughts he fell asleep before he was aware of it.

He dreamt how he and his brave followers rushed at Shamil, with songs and with the cry, "Hadji Murád is coming!" and how they seized him and his wives, and he heard the wives crying and sobbing. He woke up. The song, *Lya-il-allysha,* and the cry, "Hadji Murád is coming!" and the weeping of Shamil's wives, was the howling weeping and laughter of jackals that awoke him. Hadji Murád lifted his head, glanced at the sky which seen between the trunks of the trees was already getting light in the east, and inquired after Khan Mahomá of a *murid* who sat at some distance from him. On hearing that Khan Mahomá had not yet returned, Hadji Murád again bowed his head and fell asleep at once.

He was awakened by the merry voice of Khan

Mahomá, returning from his mission with Bata. Khan Mahomá at once sat down beside Hadji Murád, and told him how the soldiers had met them and had led them to the Prince himself; and how pleased the Prince was, and how he promised to meet them in the morning, where the Russians would be felling trees beyond the Mitchík, in the Shalín glade. Bata interrupted his fellow-envoy to add details of his own.

Hadji Murád asked particularly for the words with which Vorontsóv had answered his offer to go over to the Russians; and Khan Mahomá and Bata replied with one voice that the Prince promised to receive Hadji Murád as a guest, and to act so that it should be well for him.

Then Hadji Murád questioned them about the road, and when Khan Mahomá assured him that he knew the way well, and would conduct him straight to the spot, Hadji Murád took out some money and gave Bata the promised three roubles; and he ordered his men to take out of the saddle-bags his gold-ornamented weapons and his turban, and to clean themselves up so as to look well when they arrived among the Russians.

While they cleaned their weapons, harness and horses, the stars faded away; it became quite light, and an early morning breeze sprang up.

V

Early in the morning, while it was still dark, two companies, carrying axes and commanded by Poltorátsky, marched six miles beyond the Shahgirínsk Gate, and having thrown out a line of sharpshooters, set to work to fell trees as soon as the day broke. Towards eight o'clock the mist which had mingled with the perfumed smoke of the hissing and crackling damp green branches on the bonfires began to rise, and the wood-fellers—who till then had not seen five paces off, but had only heard one another—began to see both the bonfires and the road through the forest, blocked with fallen trees. The sun now appeared like a bright spot in the fog, and now again was hidden.

In the glade, some way from the road, Poltorátsky, and his subaltern Tíkhonof, two officers of the 3rd Company, and Baron Freze, an ex-officer of the Guards who had been reduced to the ranks for a duel, a fellow-student of Poltorátsky's at the Cadet College, were sit-

ting on drums. Bits of paper that had contained food, cigarette stumps, and empty bottles lay scattered round the drums. The officers had had some vódka, and were now eating, and drinking porter. A drummer was uncorking their third bottle.

Poltorátsky, although he had not had enough sleep, was in that peculiar state of elation and kindly careless gaiety which he always felt when he found himself among his soldiers and with his comrades, where there was a possibility of danger.

The officers were carrying on an animated conversation, the subject of which was the latest news: the death of General Sleptsóv. None of them saw in this death that most important moment of a life—its termination and return to the source whence it sprang—but they only saw in it the valour of a gallant officer, who rushed at the mountaineers sword in hand and desperately hacked them.

Though all of them—and especially those who had been in action—knew and could not help knowing that never in those days in the Caucasus, nor in fact anywhere, nor at any time,

did such hand-to-hand hacking as is always imagined and described take place (or if hacking with swords and bayonets ever does take place, it is only those who are running away that get hacked), that fiction of hand-to-hand fighting endowed them with the calm pride and cheerfulness with which they sat on drums (some with a jaunty air, others on the contrary in a very modest pose), drank and joked without troubling about death, which might overtake them at any moment as it had overtaken Sleptsóv. And, as if to confirm their expectations, in the midst of their talk, they heard to the left of the road the pleasing stirring sound of a rifle-shot; and a bullet, merrily whistling somewhere in the misty air, flew past and crashed into a tree.

"Hullo!" exclaimed Poltorátsky in a merry voice; "why, that's at our line. . . . There now, Kóstya," and he turned to Freze, "now's your chance. Go back to the company. I will lead the whole company to support the cordon, and we'll arrange a battle that will be simply delightful . . . and then we'll make a report."

Freze jumped to his feet and went at a quick pace towards the smoke-enveloped spot where he had left his company.

Poltorátsky's little Kabardá dapple-bay was brought to him, and he mounted and drew up his company, and led it in the direction whence the shots were fired. The outposts stood on the skirts of the forest, in front of the bare descending slope of a ravine. The wind was blowing in the direction of the forest, and not only was it possible to see the slope of the ravine, but the opposite side of it was also distinctly visible. When Poltorátsky rode up to the line, the sun came out from behind the mist; and on the other side of the ravine, by the outskirts of a young forest, at the distance of a quarter of a mile, a few horsemen became visible. They were the Chechens who had pursued Hadji Murád and wanted to see him meet the Russians. One of them fired at the line. Several soldiers fired back. The Chechens retreated, and the firing ceased.

But when Poltorátsky and his company came up, he nevertheless gave orders to fire; and scarcely had the word been passed, when along

the whole line of sharpshooters started the incessant, merry, stirring rattle of our rifles, accompanied by pretty dissolving cloudlets of smoke. The soldiers, pleased to have some distraction, hastened to load, and fired shot after shot. The Chechens evidently caught the feeling of excitement, and leaping forward one after another, fired a few shots at our men. One of these shots wounded a soldier. It was that same Avdéev who had lain in ambush the night before.

When his comrades approached him he was lying prone, holding his wounded stomach with both hands, and rocking himself with a rhythmic motion, moaned softly. He belonged to Poltorátsky's company, and Poltorátsky, seeing a group of soldiers collected, rode up to them.

"What is it, lad? Been hit?" said Poltorátsky. "Where?"

Avdéev did not answer.

"I was just going to load, your honour, when I heard a click," said a soldier who had been with Avdéev; "and I look, and see he's dropped his gun."

"Tut, tut, tut!" Poltorátsky clicked his tongue. "Does it hurt much, Avdéev?"

"It doesn't hurt, but it stops me walking. A drop of vódka now, your honour!"

Some vódka (or rather the spirits drunk by the soldiers in the Caucasus) was found, and Panóv, severely frowning, brought Avdéev a can-lid full. Avdéev tried to drink it, but immediately handed back the lid.

"My soul turns against it," he said. "Drink it yourself."

Panóv drank up the spirit.

Avdéev raised himself, but sank back at once. They spread out a cloak and laid him on it.

"Your honour, the colonel is coming," said the sergeant-major to Poltorátsky.

"All right. Then will you see to him?" said Poltorátsky; and, flourishing his whip, he rode at a fast trot to meet Vorontsóv.

Vorontsóv was riding his thoroughbred English chestnut gelding, and was accompanied by the adjutant, a Cossack, and a Chechen interpreter.

"What's happening here?" asked Vorontsóv.

"Why, a skirmishing party attacked our advanced line," Poltorátsky answered.

"Come, come; you've arranged the whole thing yourself!"

"Oh no, Prince, not I," said Poltorátsky with a smile; "they pushed forward of their own accord."

"I hear a soldier has been wounded?"

"Yes, it's a great pity. He's a good soldier."

"Seriously?"

"Seriously, I believe . . . in the stomach."

"And do you know where I am going?" Vorontsóv asked.

"I don't."

"Can't you guess?"

"No."

"Hadji Murád has surrendered, and we are now going to meet him."

"You don't mean to say so?"

"His envoy came to me yesterday," said Vorontsóv, with difficulty repressing a smile of joy. "He will be waiting for me at the Shalín glade in a few minutes. Place sharpshooters

as far as the glade, and then come and join me."

"I understand," said Poltorátsky, lifting his hand to his cap, and rode back to his company. He led the sharpshooters to the right himself, and ordered the sergeant-major to do the same on the left side.

The wounded Avdéev had meanwhile been taken back to the fort by some of the soldiers.

On his way back to rejoin Vorontsóv, Poltorátsky noticed behind him several horsemen who were overtaking him. In front, on a white-maned horse, rode a man of imposing appearance. He wore a turban, and carried weapons with gold ornaments. This man was Hadji Murád. He approached Poltorátsky and said something to him in Tartar. Raising his eyebrows, Poltorátsky made a gesture with his arms to show that he did not understand, and smiled. Hadji Murád gave him smile for smile, and that smile struck Poltorátsky by its child-like kindliness. Poltorátsky had never expected to see the terrible mountain chief look like that. He expected to see a morose, hard-featured man; and here was a vivacious person, whose smile was so kindly that Poltorátsky felt

as if he were an old acquaintance. He had but one peculiarity: his eyes, set wide apart, gazed from under their black brows attentively, penetratingly and calmly into the eyes of others.

Hadji Murád's suite consisted of five men. Among them was Khan Mahomá, who had been to see Prince Vorontsóv that night. He was a rosy, round-faced fellow, with black lashless eyes and a beaming expression, full of the joy of life. Then there was the Avar Khanéfi, a thick-set, hairy man, whose eyebrows were joined. He was in charge of all Hadji Murád's property, and led a stud-bred horse which carried tightly-packed saddle-bags. Two men of the suite were particularly striking. The first was a Lesghian: a youth, broad-shouldered, but with a waist as slim as a woman's, a brown beard just appearing on his face, and beautiful ram-like eyes. This was Eldár. The other, Gamzálo, was a Chechen, blind in one eye, without eyebrows or eyelashes, with a short red beard, and a scar across his nose and face. Poltorátsky pointed out to Hadji Murád, Vorontsóv, who had just appeared on the road. Hadji Murád rode to meet him, and, putting

his right hand on his heart, said something in Tartar, and stopped. The Chechen interpreter translated.

"He says, 'I surrender myself to the will of the Russian Tsar. I wish to serve him,' he says. 'I wished to do so long ago, but Shamil would not let me.' "

Having heard what the interpreter said, Vorontsóv stretched out his hand in its wash-leather glove to Hadji Murád. Hadji Murád looked at it hesitatingly for a moment, and then pressed it firmly, again saying something, and looking first at the interpreter and then at Vorontsóv.

"He says he did not wish to surrender to any one but you, as you are the son of the Sirdar, and he respects you much."

Vorontsóv nodded to express his thanks. Hadji Murád again said something, pointing to his suite.

"He says that these men, his henchmen, will serve the Russians as well as he."

Vorontsóv turned towards them, and nodded to them too. The merry, black-eyed, lashless Chechen, Khan Mahomá, also nodded, and said

something which was probably amusing, for the hairy Avar drew his lips into a smile, showing his ivory-white teeth. But the red-haired Gamzálo's one red eye just glanced at Vorontsóv and then was again fixed on the ears of his horse.

When Vorontsóv and Hadji Murád with their retinues rode back to the fort, the soldiers, released from the lines, gathered in groups and made their own comments.

"What a number of souls the damned fellow has destroyed! And now see what a fuss they will make of him!"

"Naturally. He was Shamil's right hand, and now—no fear!"

"Still there's no denying it! he's a fine fellow—a regular *dzhigit!*"[1]

"And the red one? The red one squints at you like a beast!"

"Ugh! He must be a hound!"

They had all specially noticed the red one. Where the wood-felling was going on, the soldiers nearest to the road ran out to look. Their

[1] Among the Chechens, a *dzhigit* is the same as a *brave* among the Indians, but the word is inseparably connected with the idea of skilful horsemanship.

officer shouted to them, but Vorontsóv stopped him.

"Let them have a look at their old friend."

"You know who that is?" asked Vorontsóv, turning to the nearest soldier, and speaking the words slowly with his English accent.

"No, your Excellency."

"Hadji Murád. . . . Heard of him?"

"How could we help it, your Excellency? We've beaten him many a time!"

"Yes, and we've had it hot from him, too."

"Yes, that's right, your Excellency," answered the soldier, pleased to be talking with his chief.

Hadji Murád understood that they were speaking about him, and smiled brightly with his eyes.

Vorontsóv, in the most cheerful mood, returned to the fort.

VI

Young Vorontsóv was much pleased that it was he, and not any one else, who had succeeded in winning over and receiving Hadji Murád—next to Shamil Russia's chief and most active enemy. There was just one unpleasant thing about it: General Meller-Zakomélsky was in command of the army in Vozdvízhensk, and the whole affair ought to have been carried out through him; and as Vorontsóv had done everything himself without reporting it, there might be some unpleasantness; and this thought somewhat interfered with his satisfaction. On reaching his house he entrusted Hadji Murád's henchmen to the regimental adjutant, and himself showed Hadji Murád into the house.

Princess Mary Vasílevna, elegantly dressed and smiling, and her little son, a handsome curly-headed, six-year-old boy, met Hadji Murád in the drawing-room. The latter placed his hands on his heart, and through the inter-

preter—who had entered with him—said with solemnity that he regarded himself as the Prince's *kunák,* since the Prince had brought him into his own house; and that a *kunák's* whole family was as sacred as the *kunák* himself.

Hadji Murád's appearance and manners pleased Mary Vasílevna; and the fact that he flushed when she held out her large white hand to him, inclined her still more in his favour. She invited him to sit down; and having asked him whether he drank coffee, had some served up. He, however, declined it when it came. He understood a little Russian, but could not speak it. When something was said which he could not understand he smiled, and his smile pleased Mary Vasílevna, just as it had pleased Poltorátsky. The curly-headed, keen-eyed little boy (whom his mother called Búlka) standing beside her did not take his eyes off Hadji Murád, whom he had always heard spoken of as a great warrior.

Leaving Hadji Murád with his wife, Vorontsóv went to his office to do what was necessary about reporting the fact of Hadji Murád's hav-

ing come over to the Russians. When he had written a report to the general in command of the left flank—General Kozlóvsky—at Grózny, and a letter to his father, Vorontsóv hurried home, afraid that his wife might be vexed with him for forcing on her this terrible stranger, who had to be treated in such a way that he should not take offence, and yet not too kindly. But his fears were needless. Hadji Murád was sitting in an armchair with little Búlka, Vorontsóv's stepson, on his knee; and with bent head was listening attentively to the interpreter, who was translating to him the words of the laughing Mary Vasílevna. Mary Vasílevna was telling him that if every time a *kunák* admired anything of his he made him a present of it, he would soon have to about like Adam . . .

When the Prince entered, Hadji Murád rose at once, and surprising and offending Búlka by putting him off his knee, changed the playful expression of his face to a stern and serious one; and he only sat down again when Vorontsóv had himself taken a seat.

Continuing the conversation, he answered Mary Vasílevna by telling her that it was a law

among his people that anything your *kunák* admired must be presented to him.

"Thy son, *kunák!*" he said in Russian, patting the curly head of the boy, who had again climbed on his knee.

"He is delightful, your brigand!" said Mary Vasílevna, to her husband in French. "Búlka has been admiring his dagger, and he has given it to him."

Búlka showed the dagger to his father. "*C'est un objet de prix!*"[1] added she.

"*Il faudra trouver l'occasion de lui faire cadeau,*"[2] said Vorontsóv.

Hadji Murád, his eyes turned down, sat stroking the boy's curly head and saying: "*Dzhigit, dzhigit!*"

"A beautiful, beautiful dagger," said Vorontsóv, half drawing out the sharpened blade, which had a ridge down the centre. "I thank thee!"

"Ask him what I can do for him," he said to the interpreter.

The interpreter translated, and Hadji Murád

[1] "It is a thing of value."
[2] "We must find an opportunity to make him a present."

at once replied that he wanted nothing, but that he begged to be taken to a place where he could say his prayers.

Vorontsóv called his valet, and told him to do what Hadji Murád desired.

As soon as Hadji Murád was alone in the room allotted to him his face altered. The pleased expression, now kindly and now stately, vanished, and a look of anxiety showed itself. Vorontsóv had received him far better than Hadji Murád had expected. But the better the reception the less did Hadji Murád trust Vorontsóv and his officers. He feared everything: that he might be seized, chained, and sent to Siberia, or simply killed; and therefore he was on his guard. He asked Eldár, when the latter entered his room, where his *murids* had been put, and whether their arms had been taken from them, and where the horses were. Eldár reported that the horses were in the Prince's stables; that the men had been placed in a barn; that they retained their arms, and that the interpreter was giving them food and tea.

Hadji Murád shook his head in doubt; and

after undressing he said his prayers, and told Eldár to bring him his silver dagger. He then dressed, and, having fastened his belt, sat down with his legs on the divan to await what might befall him.

At four in the afternoon the interpreter came to call him to dine with the Prince.

At dinner he hardly ate anything, except some *pilau,*[3] to which he helped himself from the very part of the dish from which Mary Vasílevna had helped herself.

"He is afraid we shall poison him," Mary Vasílevna remarked to her husband. "He has helped himself from the place where I took my helping." Then, instantly turning to Hadji Murád, she asked him through the interpreter when he would pray again. Hadji Murád lifted five fingers and pointed to the sun. "Then it will soon be time," and Vorontsóv drew out his watch and pressed a spring. The watch struck four and one quarter. This evidently surprised Hadji Murád, and he asked to hear it again, and to be allowed to look at the watch.

[3] An Oriental dish, prepared with rice and mutton, or chicken.

"*Voilà l'occasion! Donnez lui la montre,*"[4] said the Princess to her husband.

Vorontsóv at once offered the watch to Hadji Murád.

The latter placed his hand on his breast and took the watch. Several times he touched the spring, listened, and nodded his head approvingly.

After dinner, Meller-Zakomélsky's aide-de-camp was announced.

The aide-de-camp informed the Prince that the General, having heard of Hadji Murád's arrival, was highly displeased that this had not been reported to him, and required Hadji Murád to be brought to him without delay. Vorontsóv replied that the General's command should be obeyed; and through the interpreter he informed Hadji Murád of these orders, and asked him to go to Meller with him.

When Mary Vasílevna heard what the aide-de-camp had come about, she at once understood that unpleasantness might arise between her husband and the General, and decided, in spite of all her husband's attempts to dissuade her, to go with him and Hadji Murád.

[4] "This is the opportunity! Give him the watch."

"Vous feriez bien mieux de rester—c'est mon affaire, non pas la vôtre . . ."[5]

"Vous ne pouvez pas m'empêcher d'aller voir madame la générale!"

"You could go some other time."

"But I wish to go now!"

There was no help for it, so Vorontsóv agreed; and they all three went.

When they entered, Meller with sombre politeness conducted Mary Vasílevna to his wife, and told his aide-de-camp to show Hadji Murád into the waiting-room, and not to let him out till further orders.

"Please . . ." he said to Vorontsóv, opening the door of his study and letting the Prince enter before him.

Having entered the study, he stopped in front of the Prince and said, without offering him a seat,—

"I am in command here, and therefore all negotiations with the enemy must be carried on through me! Why did you not report to me the fact of Hadji Murád's having come over?"

"An emissary came to me and announced

[5] "You would do much better to remain at home . . . this is my business, and not yours."

[6] "You cannot prevent my going to see the general's wife!"

Hadji Murád's wish to capitulate only to me," replied Vorontsóv, growing pale with excitement, expecting some rude expression from the angry general, and at the same time becoming infected with his anger.

"I ask you why I was not informed?"

"I intended to do so, Baron, but . . ."

"You are not to address me as 'Baron,' but as 'Your Excellency'!" And here the Baron's pent-up irritation suddenly broke out, and he uttered all that had long been boiling in his soul.

"I have not served my sovereign twenty-seven years in order that men who began their service yesterday, relying on family connections, should give orders under my very nose about matters that do not concern them!"

"Your Excellency, I request you will not say things that are incorrect!" interrupted Vorontsóv.

"I am saying what is correct, and I won't allow . . ." said the General, still more irritably.

But at that moment Mary Vasílevna entered, rustling with her skirts, and followed by a little modest-looking lady, Meller-Zakomélsky's wife.

"Come, come, Baron! Simon did not wish to displease you," began Mary Vasílevna.

"I am not speaking about that, Princess . . ."

"Well, you know, let's leave all that! . . . You know, 'A bad peace is better than a good quarrel!' . . . Oh dear, what am I saying?" and she laughed.

The angry General capitulated to the enchanting laugh of the beauty. A smile hovered under his moustache.

"I confess I was wrong," said Vorontsóv, "but—"

"Well, and I too got rather carried away," said Meller, and held out his hand to the Prince.

Peace was re-established, and it was decided to leave Hadji Murád for the present at Meller's, and then to send him to the commander of the left flank.

Hadji Murád sat in the next room, and though he did not understand what was said, he understood what it was necessary for him to understand—namely, that they were quarrelling about him, and that his desertion of Shamil was a matter of immense importance to the Rus-

sians, and that therefore not only would they not exile him or kill him, but that he would be able to demand much from them. He also understood that though Meller-Zakomélsky was the commanding-officer, he had not as much influence as his subordinate Vorontsóv; and that Vorontsóv was important and Meller-Zakomélsky unimportant; and therefore, when Meller-Zakomélsky sent for him and began to question him, Hadji Murád bore himself proudly and ceremoniously, saying that he had come from the mountains to serve the White Tsar, and would give account only to his Sirdar, meaning the commander-in-chief, Prince Vorontsóv, in Tiflis.

VII

The wounded Avdéev was taken to the hospital—a small wooden building roofed with boards, at the entrance of the fort—and was placed on one of the empty beds in the common ward. There were four patients in the ward: one, ill with typhus and in high fever, another, pale, with dark shadows under his eyes, who had ague and was just expecting another attack, and yawned continually; and two more who had been wounded in a raid three weeks before: one in the hand—he was up—and the other in the shoulder; the latter was sitting on a bed. All of them, except the typhus patient, surrounded and questioned the newcomer, and those who had brought him.

"Sometimes they fire as if it were peas they were spilling over you, and nothing happens . . . and this time only about five shots were fired," related one of the bearers.

"Each gets what fate sends!"

"Oh!" groaned Avdéev loudly, trying to

master his pain when they began to place him on the bed; but he stopped groaning when he was on it, and only frowned and moved his feet continually. He held his hands over his wound and looked fixedly before him.

The doctor came, and gave orders to turn the wounded man over, to see whether the bullet had passed out behind.

"What's this?" the doctor asked, pointing to the large white scars that crossed one another on the patient's back and loins.

"That was done long ago, your honour!" replied Avdéev, with a groan.

They were the scars left by the flogging Avdéev had received for the money he drank.

Avdéev was again turned over, and the doctor long probed in his stomach, and found the bullet, but failed to extract it. He put a dressing on the wound, and having stuck plaster over it went away. During the whole time the doctor was probing and bandaging the wound Avdéev lay with clenched teeth and closed eyes, but when the doctor had gone he opened them and looked around as though amazed. His eyes

were turned to the other patients and to the surgeon's orderly, but he seemed to see not them, but something else that surprised him.

His friends, Panóv and Serógin, came in; but Avdéev continued to lie in the same position, looking before him with surprise. It was long before he recognised his comrades, though his eyes gazed straight at them.

"I say, Peter, have you no message to send home?" said Panóv.

Avdéev did not answer, though he was looking Panóv in the face.

"I say, haven't you any orders to send home?" again repeated Panóv, touching Avdéev's cold large-boned hand.

Avdéev seemed to come to.

"Ah! . . . Panóv!"

"Yes, here. . . . I've come! Have you nothing for home? Serógin would write a letter."

"Serógin . . ." said Avdéev, moving his eyes with difficulty towards Serógin, "will you write? . . . Well then, write so: 'Your son,' say, 'Peter, has given orders that you

should live long.[1] He envied his brother' . . . I told you about that to-day . . . 'and now he is himself glad. Don't worry him. . . . Let him live. God grant it him. I am glad!' Write that."

Having said this he was long silent, with his eyes fixed on Panóv.

"And did you find your pipe?" he suddenly asked. Panóv did not reply.

"Your pipe . . . your pipe! I mean, have you found it?" Avdéev repeated.

"It was in my bag."

"That's right! . . . Well, and now give me a candle. . . . I am going to die," said Avdéev.

Just then Poltorátsky came in to inquire after his soldier.

"How goes it, my lad! Badly?" said he.

Avdéev closed his eyes and shook his head negatively. His broad-cheeked face was pale and stern. He did not reply, but again said to Panóv,—

[1] A popular expression, meaning that the sender of the message is already dead.

"Bring a candle. . . . I am going to die."

A wax taper was placed in his hand, but his fingers would not bend, so it was placed between them, and was held up for him.

Poltorátsky went away, and five minutes later the orderly put his ear to Avdéev's heart and said that all was over.

Avdéev's death was described in the following manner in the report sent to Tiflis,—

"23*rd Nov.*—Two companies of the Kurín regiment advanced from the fort on a wood-felling expedition. At midday a considerable number of mountaineers suddenly attacked the wood-fellers. The sharpshooters began to retreat, but the 2nd Company charged with the bayonet and overthrew the mountaineers. In this affair two privates were slightly wounded and one killed. The mountaineers lost about a hundred men killed and wounded.

VIII

On the day Peter Avdéev died in the hospital at Vozdvízhensk, his old father, the wife of the brother in whose place he had enlisted, and that brother's daughter—who was already approaching womanhood and almost of age to get married—were threshing oats on the hard-frozen threshing floor.

The day before, there had been a heavy fall of snow followed towards morning by a severe frost. The old man woke when the cocks were crowing for the third time, and seeing the bright moonlight through the frozen window-panes, got down from the oven-top, put on his boots, his sheepskin coat and cap, and went out to the threshing-floor. Having worked there for a couple of hours, he returned to the hut and awoke his son and the women. When the younger woman and the girl came to the threshing-floor they found it ready swept, a wooden shovel sticking in the dry white snow, and beside it birch brooms with the twigs upwards,

and two rows of oat-sheaves laid ears to ears in a long line the whole length of the clean threshing-floor. They choose their flails and started threshing, keeping time with their triple blows. The old man struck powerfully with his heavy flail, breaking the straw; the girl struck the ears from above with measured blows; and his daughter-in-law turned the oats over with her flail.

The moon had set, dawn was breaking, and they were finishing the line of sheaves when Akím, the eldest son, in his sheepskin and cap, joined the threshers.

"What are you lazing about for?" shouted his father to him, pausing in his work and leaning on his flail.

"The horses had to be seen to."

"'Horses seen to!'" the father repeated, mimicking him. "The old woman will look after them. . . . Take your flail! You're getting too fat, you drunkard!"

"Have you been standing me treat?" muttered the son.

"What?" said the old man, frowning sternly and missing a stroke.

The son silently took a flail, and they began threshing with four flails.

"Trak, tapatam . . . trak, tapatam . . . trak . . ." came down the old man's heavy flail after the three others.

"Why, you've got a nape like a goodly gentleman! . . . Look here, my trousers have hardly anything to hang on!" said the old man, omitting his stroke and only swinging his flail in the air, so as not to get out of time.

They had finished the row, and the women began removing the straw with rakes.

"Peter was a fool to go in your stead. They'd have knocked the nonsense out of you in the army; and he was worth five of such as you at home!"

"That's enough, father," said the daughter-in-law, as she threw aside the binders that had come off the sheaves.

"Yes, feed the six of you, and get no work out of a single one! Peter used to work for two. He was not like . . ."

Along the trodden path from the house came the old man's wife, the frozen snow creaking under the new bark shoes she wore over her

tightly-wound woollen leg-bands. The men were shovelling the unwinnowed grain into heaps, the woman and the girl sweeping up what remained.

"The Elder has been, and orders everybody to go and work for the master, carting bricks," said the old woman. "I've got breakfast ready. . . . Come along, won't you?"

"All right. . . . Harness the roan and go," said the old man to Akím, "and you'd better look out that you don't get me into trouble, as you did the other day! . . . One can't help regretting Peter!"

"When he was at home you used to scold him," retorted Akím. "Now he's away you keep nagging at me."

"That shows you deserve it," said his mother in the same angry tones. "You'll never be Peter's equal."

"Well, all right," said the son.

"'All right,' indeed! You've drunk the meal, and now you say 'all right!'"

"Let bygones be bygones!" said the daughter-in-law.

The disagreements between father and son had begun long ago—almost from the time

Peter went as a soldier. Even then the old man felt that he had parted with an eagle for a cuckoo. It is true that according to right—as the old man understood it—a childless man had to go in place of a family man. Akím had four children, and Peter had none; but Peter was a worker like his father, skilful, observant, strong, enduring, and above all, industrious. He was always at work. If he happened to pass by where people were working he lent a helping hand, as his father would have done, and took a turn or two with the scythe, or loaded a cart, or felled a tree, or chopped some wood. The old man regretted his going away, but there was no help for it. Conscription in those days was like death. A soldier was a severed branch; and to think about him at home was to tear one's heart uselessly. Only occasionally, to prick his elder son, the father mentioned him, as he had done that day. But his mother often thought of her younger son, and she had long—for more than a year now—been asking her husband to send Peter a little money, to which the old man made no reply.

The Kúrenkovs were a well-to-do family, and

the old man had some savings hidden away; but he would on no account have consented to touch what he had laid by. Now, however, his old woman, having heard him mention their younger son, made up her mind again to ask him to send him at least a rouble after selling the oats. This she did. As soon as the young people had gone to work for the proprietor, and the old folk were left alone together, she persuaded him to send Peter a rouble out of the oats-money.

So when ninety-six bushels of the winnowed oats had been packed on to three sledges, lined with sacking carefully pinned together at the top with wooden skewers, she gave her old man a letter written at her dictation by the church clerk; and the old man promised when he got to town to enclose a rouble, and to send it off to the right address.

The old man, dressed in a new sheepskin with a homespun cloak over it, his legs wrapped round with warm white woollen leg-bands, took the letter, placed it in his wallet, said a prayer, got into the front sledge, and drove to town. His grandson drove in the last sledge. When

he reached the town the old man asked the innkeeper to read the letter to him, and he listened to it attentively and approvingly.

In her letter Peter's mother first sent him her blessing, then greetings from everybody, and the news of his godfather's death; and at the end she added that Aksínya (Peter's wife) had not wished to stay with them, but had gone into service, where they heard she was living well and honestly. Then came a reference to that present of a rouble; and finally, in her own words, what the old woman, with tears in her eyes and yielding to her sorrow, had dictated and the church clerk had taken down exactly, word for word:—

"One thing more, my darling child, my sweet dove, my own Peterkin! I have wept my eyes out lamenting for thee, thou light of my eyes. To whom hast thou left me? . . ." At this point the old woman had sobbed and wept, and said: "That will do!" So the words stood in the letter; but it was not fated that Peter should receive the news of his wife's having left home, nor the present of the rouble, nor his mother's last words. The letter with the money in it

came back with the announcement that Peter had been killed in the war, defending his Tsar, his Fatherland, and the Orthodox Faith. That is how the army clerk expressed it.

The old woman, when this news reached her, wept for as long as she could spare time, and then set to work again. The very next Sunday she went to church, and had a requiem chanted, and Peter's name entered among those for whose souls prayers were to be said; and she distributed bits of holy bread to all the good people, in memory of Peter the servant of God.

Aksínya, the soldier's widow, also lamented loudly when she heard of her beloved husband's death, with whom she had lived but one short year. She regretted her husband, and her own ruined life; and in her lamentations mentioned Peter's brown locks and his love, and the sadness of her life with her little orphaned Vánka; and bitterly reproached Peter for having had pity on his brother, but none on her—obliged to wander among strangers!

But in the depth of her soul Aksínya was glad of her husband's death. She was pregnant by the shopman in whose service she was living;

and no one would now have a right to scold her, and the shopman could marry her as, when he was persuading her to yield, he had said he would.

IX

Michael Seménovich Vorontsóv, being the son of the Russian ambassador, had been educated in England, and possessed a European education quite exceptional among the higher Russian officials of his day. He was ambitious, gentle, and kind in his manner with inferiors, and a finished courtier with superiors. He did not understand life without power and submission. He had obtained all the highest ranks and decorations, and was looked upon as a clever commander, and even as the conqueror of Napoleon at Krásnoye.

In 1852 he was over seventy, but was still quite fresh, moved briskly, and above all was in full possession of a facile refined and agreeable intellect, which he used to maintain his power and to strengthen and spread his popularity. He possessed large means—his own and his wife's (*née* Countess Branítsky)—and received an enormous salary as viceroy; and he

spent a great part of his means on building a palace and laying out a garden on the south coast of the Crimea.

On the evening of 4th December 1852 a courier's *troyka* drew up before his palace in Tiflis. A tired officer, black with dust, whom General Kozlóvsky had sent with the news of Hadji Murád's surrender to the Russians, went stretching the stiffened muscles of his legs past the sentinel, and entered the wide porch. It was six o'clock, and Vorontsóv was just going in to dinner, when he was informed of the arrival of the courier. Vorontsóv received him at once, and was therefore a few minutes late for dinner.

When he entered the drawing-room, the thirty persons invited to dine, sitting beside the Princess Elizabeth Ksavérevna Vorontsóv, or standing in groups by the windows, turned their faces towards him. Vorontsóv was dressed in his usual black military coat, with shoulder-straps but no epaulets, and wore the White Cross of the Order of St. George at his neck.

His clean-shaven, foxlike face smiled pleasantly as, screwing up his eyes, he surveyed the

assembly. Entering with quick, soft steps he apologised to the ladies for being late, greeted the men, and approaching the Princess Manana Orbelyáni—a tall, fine, handsome woman of Oriental type about forty-five years of age—he offered her his arm to take her in to dinner. The Princess Elizabeth Ksavérevna Vorontsóv herself gave her arm to a red-haired general with bristly moustaches, who was visiting Tiflis. A Georgian Prince offered his arm to the Princess Vorontsóv's friend, the Countess Choiseuil; Dr. Andréevsky, the aide-de-camp, and others, with ladies or without, followed these first couples. Footmen in livery and knee-breeches drew back and replaced the guests' chairs when they sat down, while the major-domo ceremoniously ladled out steaming soup from a silver tureen.

Vorontsóv took his place in the centre of one side of the long table, and his wife sat opposite, with the General on her right. On the Prince's right sat his lady, the beautiful Orbelyáni; and on his left was a graceful, dark, red-cheeked Georgian woman, glittering with jewels and incessantly smiling.

"*Excellentes, chère amie!*"[1] replied Vorontsóv to his wife's inquiry about what news the courier had brought him. "*Simon a eu de la chance!*"[2] And he began to tell aloud, so that every one could hear, the striking news (for him alone not quite unexpected, because negotiations had long been going on) that the bravest and most famous of Shamil's officers, Hadji Murád, had come over to the Russians, and would in a day or two be brought to Tiflis.

Everybody—even the young aides-de-camp and officials who sat at the far ends of the table, and who had been quietly laughing at something among themselves—became silent and listened.

"And you, General, have you ever met this Hadji Murád?" asked the Princess of her neighbour, the carroty General with the bristly moustaches, when the Prince had finished speaking.

"More than once, Princess."

And the General went on to tell how Hadji Murád, after the mountaineers had captured Gergebel in 1843, had fallen upon General

[1] "Excellent, my dear!"
[2] "Simon has had good fortune."

Pahlen's detachment and killed Colonel Zolotúkhin almost before their very eyes.

Vorontsóv listened to the General and smiled amiably, evidently pleased that the latter had joined in the conversation. But suddenly Vorontsóv's face assumed an absent-minded and depressed expression.

The General, having started talking, had begun to tell of his second encounter with Hadji Murád.

"Why, it was he, if your Excellency will please remember," said the General, "who arranged the ambush that attacked the rescue party in the 'Biscuit' expedition."

"Where?" asked Vorontsóv, screwing up his eyes.

What the brave General spoke of as the "rescue," was the affair in the unfortunate Dargo campaign in which a whole detachment, including Prince Vorontsóv who commanded it, would certainly have perished had it not been rescued by the arrival of fresh troops. Every one knew that the whole Dargo campaign under Vorontsóv's command—in which the Russians lost many killed and wounded and several can-

non—had been a shameful affair; and therefore, if any one mentioned it in Vorontsóv's presence, they only did so in the aspect in which Vorontsóv had reported it to the Tsar: as a brilliant achievement of the Russian army. But the word "rescue" plainly indicated that it was not a brilliant victory, but a blunder costing many lives. Everybody understood this, and some pretended not to notice the meaning of the General's words, others nervously waited to see what would follow, while a few exchanged glances and smiled. Only the carroty General with the bristly moustaches noticed nothing, and, carried away by his narrative, quietly replied,—

"At the rescue, your Excellency."

Having started on his favourite theme the General recounted circumstantially how Hadji Murád had so cleverly cut the detachment in two, that if the rescue party had not arrived (he seemed to be particularly fond of repeating the word "rescue") not a man in the division would have escaped, because. . . . The General did not finish his story, for Manana Orbelyáni, having understood what was happen-

ing, interrupted him by asking if he had found comfortable quarters in Tiflis. The General, surprised, glanced at everybody all round, and saw his aides-de-camp from the end of the table looking fixedly and significantly at him, and suddenly he understood! Without replying to the Princess's question he frowned, became silent, and began hurriedly eating, without chewing, the delicacy that lay on his plate, both the appearance and taste of which completely mystified him.

Everybody felt uncomfortable, but the discomfort of the situation was relieved by the Georgian Prince—a very stupid man, but an extraordinarily refined and artful flatterer and courtier—who sat on the other side of the Princess Vorontsóv. Without seeming to have noticed anything, he began to relate how Hadji Murád had carried off the widow of Akhmet Khan of Mekhtulí.

"He came into the village at night, seized what he wanted, and galloped off again with the whole party."

"Why did he want that particular woman?" asked the Princess.

"Oh, he was her husband's enemy, and pursued him, but could never once succeed in meeting him right up to the time of his death, so he revenged himself on the widow."

The Princess translated this into French to her old friend the Countess Choiseuil, who sat next to the Georgian Prince.

"*Quelle horreur!*"[3] said the Countess, closing her eyes and shaking her head.

"Oh, no!" said Vorontsóv, smiling. "I have been told that he treated his captive with chivalrous respect and afterwards released her."

"Yes, for a ransom!"

"Well, of course. But, all the same, he acted honourably."

These words of the Prince's set the tone for the further conversation. The courtiers understood that the more importance was attributed to Hadji Murád the better pleased the Prince would be.

"The man's audacity is amazing. A remarkable man!"

"Why, in 1849, he dashed into Temir Khan

[3] How horrible!"

Shurá, and plundered the shops in broad daylight."

An Armenian sitting at the end of the table, who had been in Temir Khan Shurá at the time, related the particulars of that exploit of Hadji Murád's.

In fact, only Hadji Murád was talked about during the whole dinner.

Everybody in succession praised his courage, his ability, and his magnanimity. Some one mentioned his having ordered twenty-six prisoners to be slain; but that too was met by the usual rejoinder, "What's to be done? *À la guerre, comme à la guerre!*"[4]

"He is a great man."

"Had he been born in Europe he might have been another Napoleon," said the stupid Georgian prince with a gift of flattery.

He knew that every mention of Napoleon was pleasant to Vorontsóv, who wore the White Cross at his neck as a reward for having defeated him.

"Well, not Napoleon, perhaps, but a gallant cavalry general, if you like," said Vorontsóv.

[4] "War is war."

"If not Napoleon, then Murad."

"And his name is *Hadji* Murád!"

"Hadji Murád has surrendered, and now there'll be an end to Shamil also," some one remarked.

"They feel that now"—this "now" meant under Vorontsóv—"they can't hold out," remarked another.

"*Tout cela est grâce à vous!*"[5] said Manana Orbelyáni.

Prince Vorontsóv tried to moderate the waves of flattery which began to flow over him. Still, it was pleasant, and in the best of spirits he led his lady back into the drawing-room.

After dinner, when coffee was being served in the drawing-room, the Prince was particularly amiable to everybody, and going up to the General with the red bristly moustaches, he tried to appear not to have noticed his blunder.

Having made a round of the visitors, he sat down to the card table. He only played the old-fashioned game of ombre. The Prince's partners were the Georgian Prince, an Arme-

[5] "And all that, thanks to you!"

nian General (who had learnt the game of ombre from Prince Vorontsóv's valet, and the fourth was Dr. Andréevsky, a man remarkable for the great influence he exercised.

Placing beside him his gold snuff-box, with a portrait of Alexander I. on the lid, the Prince tore open a pack of highly-glazed cards, and was going to spread them out when his Italian valet, Giovanni, brought him a letter on a silver tray.

"Another courier, your Excellency."

Vorontsóv laid down the cards, excused himself, opened the letter, and began to read.

The letter was from his son, who described Hadji Murád's surrender, and his own encounter with Meller-Zakomélsky.

The Princess came up and inquired what their son had written.

"It's all about the same matter. . . . *Il a eu quelques désagréments avec le commandant de la place. Simon a eu tort.*[6] . . . But 'All's well that ends well,' " he added in English, handing the letter to his wife; and

[6] "He has had some unpleasantness with the commander of the place. Simon was in the wrong."

turning to his respectfully waiting partners, he asked them to draw cards.

When the first round had been dealt, Vorontsóv did what he was in the habit of doing when in a particularly pleasant mood: with his white, wrinkled old hand he took out a pinch of French snuff, carried it up to his nose, and released it.

X

When, next day, Hadji Murád appeared at the Prince's palace, the waiting-room was already full of people. Yesterday's General with the bristly moustaches was there in full uniform, with all his decorations, having come to take leave. There was the commander of a regiment who was in danger of being court-martialled for misappropriating commissariat money; and there was a rich Armenian (patronised by Doctor Andréevsky) who wanted to get from the Government a renewal of his monopoly for the sale of vódka. There, dressed in black, was the widow of an officer who had been killed in action. She had come to ask for a pension, or for free education for her children. There was a ruined Georgian Prince in a magnificent Georgian costume, who was trying to obtain for himself some confiscated church property. There was an official with a large roll of paper containing a new plan for subjugating the Caucasus. There was also a Khan,

who had come solely to be able to tell his people at home that he had called on the Prince.

They all waited their turn, and were one by one shown into the Prince's cabinet and out again by the aide-de-camp, a handsome, fair-haired youth.

When Hadji Murád entered the waiting-room with his brisk though limping step all eyes were turned towards him, and he heard his name whispered from various parts of the room.

He was dressed in a long white Circassian coat over a brown *beshmét* trimmed round the collar with fine silver lace. He wore black leggings and soft shoes of the same colour, which were stretched over his instep as tight as gloves. On his head he wore a high cap, draped turban-fashion—that same turban for which, on the denunciation of Akhmet Khan, he had been arrested by General Klügenau, and which had been the cause of his going over to Shamil.

Hadji Murád stepped briskly across the parquet floor of the waiting-room, his whole slender figure swaying slightly in consequence of his lameness in one leg, whch was shorter than the

other. His eyes, set far apart, looked calmly before him and seemed to see no one.

The handsome aide-de-camp, having greeted him, asked him to take a seat while he went to announce him to the Prince; but Hadji Murád declined to sit down, and, putting his hand on his dagger, stood with one foot advanced, looking contemptuously at all those present.

The Prince's interpreter, Prince Tarkhánov, approached Hadji Murád and spoke to him. Hadji Murád answered abruptly and unwillingly. A Kumýk Prince, who was there to lodge a complaint against a police official, came out of the Prince's room, and then the aide-de-camp called Hadji Murád, led him to the door of the cabinet, and showed him in.

Vorontsóv received Hadji Murád standing beside his table. The white old face of the commander-in-chief did not wear yesterday's smile, but was rather stern and solemn.

On entering the large room, with its enormous table and great windows with green venetian blinds, Hadji Murád placed his small sunburnt hands on that part of his chest where the front of his white coat overlapped, and, having low-

ered his eyes, began without hurrying to speak in Tartar distinctly and respectfully, using the Kumýk dialect, which he spoke well.

"I put myself under the powerful protection of the great Tsar and of yourself," said he, "and promise to serve the White Tsar in faith and truth to the last drop of my blood, and I hope to be useful to you in the war with Shamil, who is my enemy and yours."

Having heard the interpreter out, Vorontsóv glanced at Hadji Murád, and Hadji Murád glanced at Vorontsóv.

The eyes of the two men met, and expressed to each other much that could not have been put into words, and that was not at all what the interpreter said. Without words they told each other the whole truth. Vorontsóv's eyes said that he did not believe a single word Hadji Murád was saying, and that he knew he was and always would be an enemy to everything Russian, and had surrendered only because he was obliged to. Hadji Murád understood this, and yet continued to give assurances of his fidelity. His eyes said, "That old man ought to be thinking of his death, and not of war; but

though old he is cunning, and I must be careful." Vorontsóv understood this also, but nevertheless he spoke to Hadji Murád in the way he considered necessary for the success of the war.

"Tell him," said Vorontsóv, "that our sovereign is as merciful as he is mighty, and will probably at my request pardon him and take him into his service. . . . Have you told him?" he asked, looking at Hadji Murád. . . . "Until I receive my master's gracious decision, tell him I take it on myself to receive him and to make his sojourn among us pleasant."

Hadji Murád again pressed his hands to the centre of his chest, and began to say something with animation.

"He says," the interpreter translated, "that before, when he governed Avaria in 1839, he served the Russians faithfully, and would never have deserted them had his enemy, Akhmet Khan, wishing to ruin him, not calumniated him to General Klügenau."

"I know, I know," said Vorontsóv (though, if he had ever known, he had long forgotten

it). "I know," said he, sitting down and motioning Hadji Murád to the divan that stood beside the wall. But Hadji Murád did not sit down. Shrugging his powerful shoulders as a sign that he could not make up his mind to sit in the presence of so important a man, he went on, addressing the interpreter,—

"Akhmet Khan and Shamil are both my enemies. Tell the Prince that Akhmet Khan is dead, and I cannot revenge myself on him; but Shamil lives, and I will not die without taking vengeance on him," said he, knitting his brows and tightly closing his mouth.

"Yes, yes; but how does he want to revenge himself on Shamil?" said Vorontsóv quietly to the interpreter. "And tell him he may sit down."

Hadji Murád again declined to sit down; and, in answer to the question, replied that his object in coming over to the Russians was to help them to destroy Shamil.

"Very well, very well," said Vorontsóv; "but what exactly does he wish to do? . . . Sit down, sit down!"

Hadji Murád sat down, and said that if only

they would send him to the Lesghian line, and would give him an army, he would guarantee to raise the whole of Daghestan, and Shamil would then be unable to hold out.

"That would be excellent. . . . I'll think it over," said Vorontsóv.

The interpreter translated Vorontsóv's words to Hadji Murád.

Hadji Murád pondered.

"Tell the Sirdar one thing more," Hadji Murád began again: "That my family are in the hands of my enemy, and that as long as they are in the mountains I am bound, and cannot serve him. Shamil would kill my wife and my mother and my children if I went openly against him. Let the Prince first exchange my family for the prisoners he has, and then I will destroy Shamil or die!"

"All right, all right," said Vorontsóv. "I will think it over. . . . Now let him go to the chief of the staff, and explain to him in detail his position, intentions, and wishes."

Thus ended the first interview between Hadji Murád and Vorontsóv.

That evening, at the new theatre, which was

decorated in Oriental style, an Italian opera was performed. Vorontsóv was in his box when the striking figure of the limping Hadji Murád wearing a turban appeared in the stalls. He came in with Lóris-Mélikov,[1] Vorontsóv's aide-de-camp, in whose charge he was placed, and took a seat in the front row. Having sat through the first act with Oriental, Mohammedan dignity, expressing no pleasure, but only obvious indifference, he rose and looking calmly round at the audience went out, drawing to himself everybody's attention.

The next day was Monday, and there was the usual evening party at the Vorontsóvs'. In the large brightly-lighted hall a band was playing, hidden among trees. Young and not very young women, in dresses displaying their bare necks arms and breasts, turned round and round in the embrace of men in bright uniforms. At the buffet footmen in red swallow-tail coats and wearing shoes and knee-breeches, poured out champagne and served sweetmeats

[1] Count Michael Tariélovitch Lóris-Mélikov, who afterwards became Minister of the Interior, and framed the Liberal ukase which was signed by Alexander II. the day that he was assassinated.

to the ladies. The "Sirdar's" wife also, in spite of her age, went about half-dressed among the visitors, affably smiling, and through the interpreter said a few amiable words to Hadji Murád, who glanced at the visitors with the same indifference he had shown yesterday in the theatre. After the hostess, other half-naked women came up to him, and all of them shamelessly stood before him and smilingly asked him the same question: How he liked what he saw? Vorontsóv himself, wearing gold epaulets and gold shoulder-knots, with his white cross and ribbon at his neck, came up and asked him the same question, evidently feeling sure, like all the others, that Hadji Murád could not help being pleased at what he saw. Hadji Murád replied to Vorontsóv, as he had replied to them all, that among his people nothing of the kind was done, without expressing an opinion as to whether it was good or bad that it was so.

Here at the ball Hadji Murád tried to speak to Vorontsóv about buying out his family; but Vorontsóv, pretending he had not heard him, walked away; and Lóris-Mélikov afterwards

told Hadji Murád that this was not the place to talk about business.

When it struck eleven Hadji Murád, having made sure of the time by the watch the Vorontsóvs had given him, asked Lóris-Mélikov whether he might now leave. Lóris-Mélikov said he might, though it would be better to stay. In spite of this Hadji Murád did not stay, but drove in the phaeton placed at his disposal to the quarters that had been assigned to him.

XI

On the fifth day of Hadji Murád's stay in Tiflis, Lóris-Mélikov, the Viceroy's aide-de-camp, came to see him at the latter's command.

"My head and my hands are glad to serve the Sirdar," said Hadji Murád with his usual diplomatic expression, bowing his head and putting his hands to his chest. "Command me!" said he, looking amiably into Lóris-Mélikov's face.

Lóris-Mélikov sat down in an arm-chair placed by the table, and Hadji Murád sank on to a low divan opposite, and resting his hands on his knees, bowed his head and listened attentively to what the other said to him.

Lóris-Mélikov, who spoke Tartar fluently, told him that though the Prince knew about his past life, he yet wanted to hear the whole story from himself.

"Tell it me, and I will write it down and translate it into Russian, and the Prince will send it to the Emperor."

Hadji Murád remained silent for a while (he never interrupted any one, but always waited to see whether his collocutor had not something more to say). Then he raised his head, shook back his cap, and smiled the peculiar childlike smile that had captivated Mary Vasílevna.

"I can do that," said he, evidently flattered by the thought that his story would be read by the Emperor.

"Thou must tell me" (nobody is addressed as "you" in Tartar) "everything, deliberately, from the beginning," said Lóris-Mélikov, drawing a notebook from his pocket.

"I can do that, only there is much—very much—to tell! Many events have happened!" said Hadji Murád.

"If thou canst not do it all in one day, thou wilt finish it another time," said Lóris-Mélikov.

"Shall I begin at the beginning?"

"Yes, at the very beginning . . . where thou wast born, and where thou didst live."

Hadji Murád's head sank, and he sat in that position for a long time. Then he took a stick that lay beside the divan, drew a little knife

with ivory gold-inlaid handle, sharp as a razor, from under his dagger, and started whittling the stick with it and speaking at the same time.

"Write: Born in Tselméss, a small *aoul,* 'the size of an ass's head,' as we in the mountains say," he began. "Not far from it, about two cannon-shots, lies Khunzákh, where the Khans lived. Our family was closely connected with them.

"My mother, when my eldest brother Osman was born, nursed the eldest Khan, Abu Nutsal Khan. Then she nursed the second son of the Khan, Umma Khan, and reared him; but Akhmet, my second brother, died; and when I was born and the Khansha [1] bore Bulách Khan, my mother would not go as wet-nurse again. My father ordered her to, but she would not. She said: 'I should again kill my own son; and I will not go.' Then my father, who was passionate, struck her with a dagger, and would have killed her had they not rescued her from him. So she did not give me up, and later on she composed a song . . . but I need not tell that.

[1] Khansha, Khan's wife.

"Well, so my mother did not go as nurse," he said, with a jerk of his head, "and the Khansha took another nurse, but still remained fond of my mother; and mother used to take us children to the Khansha's palace, and we played with her children, and she was fond of us.

"There were three young Khans: Abu Nutsal Khan, my brother Osman's foster-brother; Umma Khan, my own sworn brother; and Bulách Khan, the youngest—whom Shamil threw over the precipice. But that happened later.

"I was about sixteen when *murids* began to visit the *aouls*. They beat the stones with wooden scimitars, and cried, 'Mussulmans, *Ghazaváť!*' The Chechens all went over to Muridism, and the Avars began to go over, too. I was then living in the palace like a brother of the Khans. I could do as I liked, and I became rich. I had horses and weapons and money. I lived for pleasure and had no care, and went on like that till the time when Kazi-Mulla, the Imám, was killed and Hamzád succeeded him. Hamzád sent envoys to the

Khans to say that if they did not join the *Ghazavát* he would destroy Khunzákh.

"This needed consideration. The Khans feared the Russians, but were also afraid to join in the Holy War. The old Khansha sent me with her second son, Umma Khan, to Tiflis, to ask the Russian commander-in-chief for help against Hamzád. The commander-in-chief at Tiflis was Baron Rosen. He did not receive either me or Umma Khan. He sent word that he would help us, but did nothing. Only his officers came riding to us and played cards with Umma Khan. They made him drunk with wine, and took him to bad places; and he lost all he had to them at cards. His body was as strong as a bull's, and he was as brave as a lion, but his soul was weak as water. He would have gambled away his last horses and weapons if I had not made him come away.

"After visiting Tiflis my ideas changed, and I advised the old Khansha and the Khans to join the *Ghazavát*. . . ."

"What made you change your mind?" asked Lóris-Mélikov. "Were you not pleased with the Russians?"

Hadji Murád paused.

"No, I was not pleased," he answered decidedly, closing his eyes. "And there was also another reason why I wished to join the *Ghazavát.*"

"What was that?"

"Why, near Tselméss the Khan and I encountered three *murids,* two of whom escaped, but the third one I shot with my pistol.

"He was still alive when I approached to take his weapons. He looked up at me, and said, 'Thou hast killed me. . . . I am happy; but thou art a Mussulman, young and strong. Join the *Ghazavát!* God wills it!"

"And did you join it?"

"I did not, but it made me think," said Hadji Murád, and he went on with his tale.

"When Hamzád approached Khunzákh we sent our Elders to him to say that we would agree to join the *Ghazavát* if the Imám would send a learned man to us to explain it to us. Hamzád had our Elders' moustaches shaved off, their nostrils pierced, and cakes hung to their noses; and in that condition he sent them back to us.

"The Elders brought word that Hamzád was ready to send a Sheik to teach us the *Ghazavát,* but only if the Khansha sent him her youngest son as a hostage. She took him at his word, and sent her youngest son, Bulách Khan. Hamzád received him well, and sent to invite the two elder brothers also. He sent word that he wished to serve the Khans as his father had served their father. . . . The Khansha was a weak, stupid and conceited woman, as all women are when they are not under control. She was afraid to send away both sons, and sent only Umma Khan. I went with him. We were met by *murids* about a mile before we arrived, and they sang and shot and caracoled around us; and when we drew near, Hamzád came out of his tent and went up to Umma Khan's stirrup and received him as a Khan. He said,—

" 'I have not done any harm to thy family, and do not wish to do any. Only do not kill me, and do not prevent my bringing the people over to the *Ghazavát,* and I will serve you with my whole army, as my father served your father! Let me live in your house, and I will

help you with my advice, and you shall do as you like!'

"Umma Khan was slow of speech. He did not know how to reply, and remained silent. Then I said that if this was so, let Hamzád come to Khunzákh, and the Khansha and the Khans would receive him with honour. . . . But I was not allowed to finish—and here I first encountered Shamil, who was beside the Imám. He said to me,—

" 'Thou hast not been asked. . . . It was the Khan!'

"I was silent, and Hamzád led Umma Khan into his tent. Afterwards Hamzád called me and ordered me to go to Khunzákh with his envoys. I went. The envoys began persuading the Khansha to send her eldest son also to Hamzád. I saw there was treachery, and told her not to send him; but a woman has as much sense in her head as an egg has hair. She ordered her son to go. Abu Nutsal Khan did not wish to. Then she said, 'I see thou art afraid!' Like a bee, she knew where to sting him most painfully. Abu Nutsal Khan flushed, and did not speak to her any more, but ordered

his horse to be saddled. I went with him.

"Hamzád met us with even greater honour than he had shown Umma Khan. He himself rode out two rifle-shot lengths down the hill to meet us. A large party of horsemen with their banners followed him, and they too sang, shot, and caracoled.

"When we reached the camp, Hamzád led the Khan into his tent, and I remained with the horses. . . .

"I was some way down the hill when I heard shots fired in Hamzád's tent. I ran there, and saw Umma Khan lying prone in a pool of blood, and Abu Nutsal was fighting the *murids*. One of his cheeks had been hacked off, and hung down. He supported it with one hand, and with the other stabbed with his dagger at all who came near him. I saw him strike down Hamzád's brother, and aim a blow at another man; but then the *murids* fired at him and he fell."

Hadji Murád stopped, and his sunburnt face flushed a dark red, and his eyes became bloodshot.

"I was seized with fear, and ran away."

"Really? . . . I thought thou never wast afraid," said Lóris-Mélikov.

"Never after that. . . . Since then I have always remembered that shame, and when I recalled it I feared nothing!"

XII

"But enough! It is time for me to pray," said Hadji Murád, drawing from an inner breast-pocket of his Circassian coat Vorontsóv's repeater watch and carefully pressing the spring. The repeater struck twelve and a quarter. Hadji Murád listened with his head on one side, repressing a childlike smile.

"*Kunák* Vorontsóv's present," he said, smiling.

"It is a good watch," said Lóris-Mélikov. "Well then, go thou and pray, and I will wait."

"*Yakshí.* Very well," said Hadji Murád, and went to his bedroom.

Left by himself, Lóris-Mélikov wrote down in his notebook the chief things Hadji Murád had related; and then lighting a cigarette, began to pace up and down the room. On reaching the door opposite the bedroom, he heard animated voices speaking rapidly in Tartar. He guessed that the speakers were Hadji Murád's

murids, and, opening the door, he went in to them.

The room was impregnated with that special leathery acid smell peculiar to the mountaineers. On a *búrka* spread out on the floor sat the one-eyed red-haired Gamzálo, in a tattered greasy *beshmét,* plaiting a bridle. He was saying something excitedly, speaking in a hoarse voice; but when Lóris-Mélikov entered he immediately became silent, and continued his work without paying any attention to him.

In front of Gamzálo stood the merry Khan Mahomá, showing his white teeth, his black lashless eyes glittering, saying something over and over again. The handsome Eldár, his sleeves turned up on his strong arms, was polishing the girths of a saddle suspended from a nail. Khanéfi, the principal worker and manager of the household, was not there; he was cooking their dinner in the kitchen.

"What were you disputing about?" asked Lóris-Mélikov, after greeting them.

"Why, he keeps on praising Shamil," said Khan Mahomá, giving his hand to Lóris-Mélikov. "He says Shamil is a great man, learned, holy, and a *dzhigit.*"

"How is it that he has left him and still praises him?"

"He has left him, and still praises him," repeated Khan Mahomá, his teeth showing and his eyes glittering.

"And does he really consider him a saint?" asked Lóris-Mélikov.

"If he were not a saint the people would not listen to him," said Gamzálo rapidly.

"Shamil is no saint, but Mansúr was!" replied Khan Mahomá. "He was a real saint. When he was Imám the people were quite different. He used to ride through the *aouls*, and the people used to come out and kiss the hem of his coat and confess their sins and vow to do no evil. Then all the people—so the old men say—lived like saints: not drinking, nor smoking, nor neglecting their prayers, and forgave one another their sins, even when blood had been spilt. If any one then found money or anything, he tied it to a stake and set it up by the roadside. In those days God gave the people success in everything—not as now."

"In the mountains they don't smoke or drink now," said Gamzálo.

"Your Shamil is a *lámorey,*" said Khan Mahomá, winking at Lóris-Mélikov. (*Lámorey* was a contemptuous term for a mountaineer.)

"Yes, *lámorey* means mountaineer," replied Gamzálo. "It is in the mountains that the eagles dwell."

"Smart fellow. Well hit!" said Khan Mahomá with a grin, pleased at his adversary's apt retort.

Seeing the silver cigarette-case in Lóris-Mélikov's hand, Khan Mahomá asked for a cigarette; and when Lóris-Mélikov remarked that they were forbidden to smoke, he winked with one eye and jerking his head in the direction of Hadji Murád's bedroom replied that they could do it as long as they were not seen. He at once began smoking—not inhaling—and pouting his red lips awkwardly as he blew out the smoke.

"That is wrong!" said Gamzálo severely, and left the room for a time.

Khan Mahomá winked after him, and, while smoking, asked Lóris-Mélikov where he could best buy a silk *beshmét* and a white cap.

"Why; hast thou so much money?"

"I have enough," replied Khan Mahomá with a wink.

"Ask him where he got the money," said Eldár, turning his handsome smiling face towards Lóris-Mélikov.

"Oh, I won it!" said Khan Mahomá quickly; and related how, walking in Tiflis the day before, he had come upon a group of men—Russians and Armenians—playing at *orlyánka* (a kind of heads-and-tails). The stake was a large one: three gold pieces and much silver. Khan Mahomá at once saw what the game consisted in, and, jingling the coppers he had in his pocket, he went up to the players and said he would stake the whole amount.

"How couldst thou do it? Hadst thou so much?" asked Lóris-Mélikov.

"I had only twelve kopeks," said Khan Mahomá, grinning.

"Well, but if thou hadst lost?"

"Why, look here!" said Khan Mahomá, pointing to his pistol.

"Wouldst thou have given that?"

"Why give it? I should have run away, and

if any one had tried to stop me I should have killed him—that's all!"

"Well, and didst thou win?"

"Aye, I won it all, and went away!"

Lóris-Mélikov quite understood what sort of men Khan Mahomá and Eldár were. Khan Mahomá was a merry fellow, careless and ready for any spree. He did not know what to do with his superfluous vitality. He was always gay and reckless, and played with his own and other people's lives. For the sake of that sport with life, he had now come over to the Russians, and for the same sport he might go back to Shamil to-morrow.

Eldár was also quite easy to understand. He was a man entirely devoted to his *murshíd;* calm, strong, and firm.

The red-haired Gamzálo was the only one Lóris-Mélikov did not understand. He saw that that man was not only loyal to Shamil, but felt an insuperable aversion contempt repugnance and hatred for all Russians; and Lóris-Mélikov could therefore not understand why he had come over to the Russians. It occurred to him that, as some of the higher officials suspected,

Hadji Murád's surrender, and his tales of hatred against Shamil, might be a fraud; and that perhaps he had surrendered only to spy out the Russians' weak spots, that—after escaping back to the mountains—he might be able to direct his forces accordingly. Gamzálo's whole person strengthened this suspicion.

"The others, and Hadji Murád himself, know how to hide their intentions; but this one betrays them by his open hatred," thought he.

Lóris-Mélikov tried to speak to him. He asked whether he did not feel dull. "No, I don't!" he growled hoarsely, without stopping his work, and he glanced at Lóris-Mélikov out of the corner of his one eye. He replied to all Lóris-Mélikov's other questions in a similar manner.

While Lóris-Mélikov was in the room, Hadji Murád's fourth *murid*, the Avar Khanéfi, came in; a man with a hairy face and neck, and a vaulted chest as rough as though overgrown with moss. He was strong, and a hard worker; always engrossed in his duties, and, like Eldár, unquestionably obedient to his master.

When he entered the room to fetch some rice,

Lóris-Mélikov stopped him and asked where he came from, and how long he had been with Hadji Murád.

"Five years," replied Khanéfi. "I come from the same *aoul* as he. My father killed his uncle, and they wished to kill me," he said calmly, looking from beneath his joined eyebrows straight into Lóris-Mélikov's face. "Then I asked them to adopt me as a brother."

"What do you mean by 'adopt as a brother?' "

"I did not shave my head nor cut my nails for two months, and then I came to them. They let me in to Patimát, his mother, and she gave me the breast and I became his brother."

Hadji Murád's voice could be heard from the next room, and Eldár, immediately answering his call, promptly wiped his hands and went with large strides into the drawing-room.

"He asks thee to come," said he, coming back.

Lóris-Mélikov gave another cigarette to the merry Khan Mahomá, and went into the drawing-room.

XIII

When Lóris-Mélikov entered the drawing-room, Hadji Murád received him with a bright face.

"Well, shall I continue?" he asked, sitting down comfortably on the divan.

"Yes, certainly," said Lóris-Mélikov. "I have been in to have a talk with thy henchmen. . . . One is a jolly fellow!" he added.

"Yes, Khan Mahomá is a frivolous fellow," said Hadji Murád.

"I liked the young handsome one."

"Ah, that's Eldár. He's young, but firm—made of iron!"

They were silent for a while.

"So I am to go on?"

"Yes, yes!"

"I told thee how the Khans were killed. . . . Well, having killed them, Hamzád rode into Khunzákh and took up his quarters in their palace. The Khansha was the only one

of the family left alive. Hamzád sent for her. She reproached him, so he winked to his *murid,* Aseldár, who struck her from behind and killed her."

"Why did he kill her " asked Lóris-Mélikov.

"What could he do? . . . Where the fore legs have gone, the hind legs must follow! He killed off the whole family. Shamil killed the youngest son—threw him over a precipice. . . .

"Then the whole of Avaria surrendered to Hamzád. But my brother and I would not surrender. We wanted his blood for the blood of the Khans. We pretended to yield, but our only thought was how to get his blood. We consulted our grandfather, and decided to await the time when he would come out of his palace, and then to kill him from an ambush. Some one overheard us and told Hamzád, who sent for grandfather, and said, 'Mind, if it be true that thy grandsons are planning evil against me, thou and they shall hang from one rafter. I do God's work, and cannot be hindered. . . . Go, and remember what I have said!'

"Our grandfather came home and told us.

"Then we decided not to wait, but to do the deed on the first day of the feast in the mosque. Our comrades would not take part in it, but my brother and I remained firm.

"We took two pistols each, put on our *búrkas,* and went to the mosque. Hamzád entered the mosque with thirty *murids.* They all had drawn swords in their hands. Aseldár, his favourite *murid* (the one who had cut off the head of the Khansha) saw us, shouted to us to take off our *búrkas,* and came towards me. I had my dagger in my hand, and I killed him with it and rushed at Hamzád; but my brother Osman had already shot him. He was still alive, and rushed at my brother dagger in hand, but I gave him a finishing blow on the head. There were thirty *murids,* and we were only two. They killed my brother Osman, but I kept them at bay, leapt through the window, and escaped.

"When it was known that Hamzád had been killed, all the people rose. The *murids* fled; and those of them who did not flee were killed."

Hadji Murád paused, and breathed heavily.

"That was all very well," he continued, "but afterwards everything was spoilt.

"Shamil succeeded Hamzád. He sent envoys to me to say that I should join him in attacking the Russians, and that if I refused he would destroy Khunzákh and kill me.

"I answered that I would not join him, and would not let him come to me. . . ."

"Why didst thou not go with him?" asked Lóris-Mélikov.

Hadji Murád frowned, and did not reply at once.

"I could not. The blood of my brother Osman and of Abu Nutsal Khan was on his hands. I did not go to him. General Rosen sent me an officer's commission, and ordered me to govern Avaria. All this would have been well, but that Rosen appointed as Khan of Kazi-Kumúkh, first Mahómet-Murza, and afterwards Akhmet Khan, who hated me. He had been trying to get the Khansha's daughter, Sultanetta, in marriage for his son, but she would not give her to him, and he believed me to be the cause of this. . . . Yes, Akhmet Khan hated me and sent his henchmen to kill me, but

I escaped from them. Then he calumniated me to General Klügenau. He said that I told the Avars not to supply wood to the Russian soldiers; and he also said that I had donned a turban—this one—" and Hadji Murád touched his turban— "and that this meant that I had gone over to Shamil. The General did not believe him, and gave orders that I should not be touched. But when the General went to Tiflis, Akhmet Khan did as he pleased. He sent a company of soldiers to seize me, put me in chains, and tied me to a cannon.

"So they kept me six days," he continued. "On the seventh day they untied me and started to take me to Temir-Khan-Shurá. Forty soldiers with loaded guns had me in charge. My hands were tied, and I knew that they had orders to kill me if I tried to escape.

"As we approached Mansooha the path became narrow, and on the right was an abyss about a hundred and twenty yards deep. I went to the right—to the very edge. A soldier wanted to stop me, but I jumped down and pulled him with me. He was killed outright, but I, as you see, remained alive.

"Ribs, head, arms, and leg—all were broken! I tried to crawl, but grew giddy and fell asleep. I awoke, wet with blood. A shepherd saw me, and called some people who carried me to an *aoul.* My ribs and head healed, and my leg too, only it has remained short," and Hadji Murád stretched out his crooked leg. "It still serves me, however, and that is well," said he.

"The people heard the news, and began coming to me. I recovered, and went to Tselméss. The Avars again called on me to rule over them," said Hadji Murád, with tranquil, confident pride, "and I agreed."

He quickly rose, and taking a portfolio out of a saddle-bag, drew out two discoloured letters and handed one of them to Lóris-Mélikov. They were from General Klügenau. Lóris-Mélikov read the first letter, which was as follows,—

"Lieutenant Hadji Murád, thou hast served under me, and I was satisfied with thee, and considered thee a good man.

"Recently Akhmet Khan informed me that thou art a traitor, that thou hast donned a turban, and hast intercourse with Shamil, and that

thou hast taught the people to disobey the Russian Government. I ordered thee to be arrested and brought before me, but thou fledst. I do not know whether this is for thy good or not, as I do not know whether thou art guilty or not.

"Now hear me. If thy conscience is pure, if thou art not guilty in anything towards the great Tsar, come to me; fear no one. I am thy defender. The Khan can do nothing to thee; he is himself under my command, so thou hast nothing to fear."

Klügenau added that he always kept his word and was just, and he again exhorted Hadji Murád to appear before him.

When Lóris-Mélikov had read this letter, Hadji Murád, before handing him the second one, told him what he had written in reply to the first.

"I wrote that I wore a turban, not for Shamil's sake, but for my soul's salvation; that I neither wished nor could go over to Shamil, because he was the cause of my father's, my brothers', and my relations' deaths; but that I could not join the Russians because I had been

dishonoured by them. (In Khunzákh, while I was bound, a scoundrel sh— on me; and I could not join your people until that man was killed.) But, above all, I feared that liar, Akhmet Khan.

"Then the General sent me this letter," said Hadji Murád, handing Lóris-Mélikov the other discoloured paper.

"Thou hast answered my first letter, and I thank thee," read Lóris-Mélikov. "Thou writest that thou art not afraid to return, but that the insult done thee by a certain Giaour prevents it; but I assure thee that the Russian law is just, and that thou shalt see him who dared to offend thee punished before thine eyes. I have already given orders to investigate the matter.

"Hear me, Hadji Murád! I have a right to be displeased with thee for not trusting me and my honour; but I forgive thee, for I know how suspicious mountaineers are in general. If thy conscience is pure, if thou hast put on a turban only for thy soul's salvation, then thou art right, and mayst look me and the Russian Government boldly in the eyes. He who dishonoured thee shall, I assure thee, be punished;

and *thy property shall be restored to thee,* and thou shalt see and know what Russian law is. And besides, we Russians look at things differently, and thou has not sunk in our eyes because some scoundrel has dishonoured thee.

"I myself have consented to the Chimrints wearing turbans; and I regard their actions in the right light; and therefore I repeat that thou hast nothing to fear. Come to me with the man by whom I am sending thee this letter. He is faithful to me, and is not the slave of thy enemies but is the friend of a man who enjoys the special favour of the Government."

Further on Klügenau again tried to persuade Hadji Murád to come over to him.

"I did not believe him," said Hadji Murád when Lóris-Mélikov had finished reading, "and did not go to Klügenau. The chief thing for me was to revenge myself on Akhmet Khan; and that I could not do through the Russians. Then Akhmet Khan surrounded Tselméss, and wanted to take me or kill me. I had too few men, and could not drive him off; and just then came an envoy with a letter from Shamil, promising to help me to defeat and kill Akhmet

Khan, and making me ruler over the whole of Avaria. I considered the matter for a long time, and then went over to Shamil; and from that time have fought the Russians continually."

Here Hadji Murád related all his military exploits, of which there were very many, and some of which were already familiar to Lóris-Mélikov. All his campaigns and raids had been remarkable for the extraordinary rapidity of his movements and the boldness of his attacks, which were always crowned with success.

"There never was any friendship between me and Shamil," said Hadji Murád at the end of his story, "but he feared me and needed me. But it so happened that I was asked who should be Imám after Shamil, and I replied: 'He will be Imám whose sword is sharpest!'

"This was told to Shamil, and he wanted to get rid of me. He sent me into Tabasarán. I went, and captured a thousand sheep and three hundred horses; but he said I had not done the right thing, and dismissed me from being *Naïb,* and ordered me to send him all the money. I sent him a thousand gold pieces. He sent his

murids, and they took from me all my property. He demanded that I should go to him; but I knew he wanted to kill me, and I did not go. Then he sent to take me. I resisted, and went over to Vorontsóv. Only I did not take my family. My mother, my wives, and my son are in his hands. Tell the Sirdar that as long as my family is in Shamil's power, I can do nothing."

"I will tell him," said Lóris-Mélikov.

"Take pains, do try! . . . What is mine is thine, only help me with the Prince! I am tied up, and the end of the rope is in Shamil's hands," said Hadji Murád, concluding his story.

XIV

On 20th December Vorontsóv wrote as follows to Chernyshóv, the Minister of War. The letter was in French,—

"I did not write to you by the last post, dear Prince, as I wished first to decide what we should do with Hadji Murád, and for the last two or three days I have not been feeling quite well.

"In my last letter I informed you of Hadji Murád's arrival here. He reached Tiflis on the 8th, and next day I made his acquaintance; and during the following seven or eight days I have spoken to him and have considered what use we can make of him in the future, and especially what we are to do with him at present; for he is much concerned about the fate of his family, and with every appearance of perfect frankness says that while they are in Shamil's hands he is paralysed and cannot render us any service, nor show his gratitude for the friendly

reception and forgiveness we have extended to him.

"His uncertainty about those dear to him makes him feverish; and the persons I have appointed to live with him assure me that he does not sleep at night, hardly eats anything, prays continually, and asks only to be allowed to ride out accompanied by several Cossacks—the sole recreation and exercise possible for him, and made necessary to him by lifelong habit. Every day he comes to me to know whether I have any news of his family, and to ask me to have all the prisoners in our hands collected and offered to Shamil in exchange for them. He would also give a little money. There are people who would let him have some for the purpose. He keeps repeating to me: 'Save my family, and then give me a chance to serve you' (preferably, in his opinion, on the Lesghian line) 'and if within a month I do not render you great service, punish me as you think fit.' I reply that to me all this appears very just; and that many persons among us would even not trust him so long as his family remains in the mountains and are not in our

hands as hostages; and that I will do everything possible to collect the prisoners on our frontier; that I have no power under our laws to give him money for the ransom of his family in addition to the sum he may himself be able to raise, but that I may perhaps find some other means of helping him. After that I told him frankly that in my opinion Shamil would not in any case give up the family, and that Shamil might tell him so straight out and promise him a full pardon and his former posts, but threaten, if Hadji Murád did not return, to kill his mother, wives, and six children; and I asked him whether he could say frankly what he would do if he received such an announcement from Shamil. Hadji Murád lifted his eyes and arms to heaven, and said that everything is in God's hands, but that he would never surrender to his foe; for he is certain Shamil would not forgive him, and he would therefore not have long to live. As to the destruction of his family, he did not think Shamil would act so rashly: firstly, to avoid making him a yet more desperate and dangerous foe; and secondly, because there were many people, and

even very influential people, in Daghestan, who would dissuade Shamil from such a course. Finally, he repeated several times that whatever God might decree for him in the future, he was at present interested in nothing but his family's ransom; and he implored me, in God's name, to help him, and to allow him to return to the neighbourhood of the Chechnya, where he could, with the help and consent of our commanders, have some intercourse with his family, and regular news of their condition, and of the best means to liberate them. He said that many people, and even some *Naïbs* in that part of the enemy's territory, were more or less attached to him; and that among the whole of the population already subjugated by Russia, or neutral, it would be easy with our help to establish relations very useful for the attainment of the aim which gives him no peace day or night, and the attainment of which would set him at ease and make it possible for him to act for our good and to win our confidence.

"He asks to be sent back to Grózny with a convoy of twenty or thirty picked Cossacks, who would serve him as a protection against

foes and us as a guarantee of his good faith.

"You will understand, dear Prince, that I have been much perplexed by all this; for, do what I will, a great responsibility rests on me. It would be in the highest degree rash to trust him entirely; yet in order to deprive him of all means of escape we should have to lock him up, and in my opinion that would be both unjust and impolitic. A measure of that kind, the news of which would soon spread over the whole of Daghestan, would do us great harm by keeping back those (and there are many such) who are now inclined more or less openly to oppose Shamil, and who are keenly watching to see how we treat the Imám's bravest and most adventurous officer, now that he has found himself obliged to place himself in our hands. If we treat Hadji Murád as a prisoner, all the good effect of the situation will be lost. Therefore I think that I could not act otherwise than as I have done, though at the same time I feel that I may be accused of having made a great mistake if Hadji Murád should take it into his head again to escape. In the service, and especially in a complicated situation such as this,

it is difficult, not to say impossible, to follow any one straight path without risking mistakes, and without accepting responsibility; but once a path seems to be the right one, I must follow it, happen what may.

"I beg of you, dear Prince, to submit this to his Majesty the Emperor for his consideration; and I shall be happy if it pleases our most august monarch to approve my action.

"All that I have written above, I have also written to Generals Zavodóvsky and Kozlóvsky, to guide the latter when communicating direct with Hadji Murád, whom I have warned not to act or go anywhere without Kozlóvsky's consent. I also told him that it would be all the better for us if he rode out with our convoy, as otherwise Shamil might spread a rumour that we were keeping him prisoner; but at the same time I made him promise never to go to Vozdvízhensk, because my son, to whom he first surrendered and whom he looks upon as his *kunák* (friend), is not the commander of that place, and some unpleasant misunderstanding might easily arise. In any case, Vozdvízhensk lies too near a thickly populated, hostile settle-

ment; while for the intercourse with his friends which he desires, Grózny is in all respects suitable.

"Besides the twenty chosen Cossacks who, at his own request, are to keep close to him, I am also sending Captain Lóris-Mélikov with him—a worthy excellent and highly-intelligent officer who speaks Tartar, and knows Hadji Murád well, and apparently enjoys his full confidence. During the ten days Hadji Murád has spent here, he has, however, lived in the same house with Lieutenant-Colonel Prince Tarkhánof, who is in command of the Shoushín District, and is here on business connected with the service. He is a truly worthy man whom I trust entirely. He also has won Hadji Murád's confidence, and through him alone—as he speaks Tartar perfectly—we have discussed the most delicate and secret matters. I have consulted Tarkhánof about Hadji Murád, and he fully agrees with me that it was necessary either to act as I have done, or to put Hadji Murád in prison and guard him in the strictest manner (for if we once treat him badly, he will not be easy to hold), or else to remove him from the country

altogether. But these two last measures would not only destroy all the advantage accruing to us from Hadji Murád's quarrel with Shamil, but would inevitably check any growth of the present insubordination and possible future revolt of the people against Shamil's power. Prince Tarkhánof tells me he himself has no doubt of Hadji Murád's truthfulness, and that Hadji Murád is convinced that Shamil will never forgive him, but would have him executed in spite of any promise of forgiveness. The only thing Tarkhánof has noticed in his intercourse with Hadji Murád that might cause any anxiety, is his attachment to his religion. Tarkhánof does not deny that Shamil might influence Hadji Murád from that side. But as I have already said, he will never persuade Hadji Murád that he will not take his life sooner or later, should the latter return to him.

"This, dear Prince, is all I have to tell you about this episode in our affairs here."

XV

The report was despatched from Tiflis on 24th December 1851, and on New Year's Eve a courier, having overdriven a dozen horses and beaten a dozen drivers till the blood came, delivered it to Prince Chernyshóv, who at that time was Minister of War; and on 1st January 1852 Chernyshóv, among other papers, took Vorontsóv's report to the Emperor Nicholas.

Chernyshóv disliked Vorontsóv because of the general respect in which the latter was held, and because of his immense wealth; and also because Vorontsóv was a real aristocrat, while Chernyshóv after all was a *parvenu;* but especially because the Emperor was particularly well disposed towards Vorontsóv. Therefore at every opportunity Chernyshóv tried to injure Vorontsóv.

When he had last presented a report about Caucasian affairs, he had succeeded in arousing Nicholas's displeasure against Vorontsóv because—through the carelessness of those in

command—almost the whole of a small Caucasian detachment had been destroyed by the mountaineers. He now intended to present the steps taken by Vorontsóv in relation to Hadji Murád in an unfavourable light. He wished to suggest to the Emperor that Vorontsóv always protected and even indulged the natives, to the detriment of the Russians; and that he had acted unwisely in allowing Hadji Murád to remain in the Caucasus, for there was every reason to suspect that he had only come over to spy on our means of defence; and that it would therefore be better to transport him to Central Russia, and make use of him only after his family had been rescued from the mountaineers and it had become possible to convince ourselves of his loyalty.

Chernyshóv's plan did not succeed, merely because on that New Year's Day Nicholas was in particularly bad spirits, and out of perversity would not have accepted any suggestion whatever from any one, and least of all from Chernyshóv, whom he only tolerated—regarding him as indispensable for the time being, but looking upon him as a blackguard; for Nicholas

knew of his endeavours at the trial of the Decembrists[1] to secure the conviction of Zachary Chernyshóv and of his attempt to obtain Zachary's property for himself. So, thanks to Nicholas's ill temper, Hadji Murád remained in the Caucasus; and his circumstances were not changed as they might have been had Chernyshóv presented his report at another time.

. . . . .

It was half-past nine o'clock when, through the mist of the cold morning (the thermometer showed 13 degrees Fahrenheit below zero) Chernyshóv's fat, bearded coachman, sitting on the box of a small sledge (like the one Nicholas drove about in) with a sharp-angled cushion-shaped azure velvet cap on his head, drew up at the entrance of the Winter Palace, and gave a friendly nod to his chum, Prince Dolgorúky's coachman—who, having brought his master to the palace, had himself long been waiting outside, in his big coat with the thickly wadded skirts, sitting on the reins and rubbing his numbed hands together. Chernyshóv had on a

[1] The military conspirators who tried to secure a Constitution for Russia in 1825, on the accession of Nicholas I.

long, large-caped cloak, with a fluffy collar of silver beaver, and a regulation three-cornered hat with cocks' feathers. He threw back the bearskin apron of the sledge, and carefully disengaged his chilled feet, on which he had no goloshes (he prided himself on never wearing any). Clanking his spurs with an air of bravado, he ascended the carpeted steps and passed through the hall door, which was respectfully opened for him by the porter, and entered the hall. Having thrown off his cloak, which an old Court lackey hurried forward to take, he went to a mirror and carefully removed the hat from his curled wig. Looking at himself in the mirror, he arranged the hair on his temples and the tuft above his forehead with an accustomed movement of his old hands, and adjusted his cross, the shoulder-knots of his uniform, and his large-initialled epaulets; and then went up the gently-ascending carpeted stairs, his not very reliable old legs feebly mounting the shallow steps. Passing the Court lackeys in gala livery, who stood obsequiously bowing, Chernyshóv entered the waiting-room. A newly appointed aide-de-camp to the Em-

peror, in a shining new uniform, with epaulets shoulder-knots and a still fresh rosy face, a small black moustache, and the hair on his temples brushed towards his eyes (Nicholas's fashion) met him respectfully.

Prince Vasíly Dolgorúky, Assistant-Minister of War, with an expression of *ennui* on his dull face—which was ornamented with similar whiskers, moustaches, and temple tufts brushed forward like Nicholas's—greeted him.

"*L'empereur?*" said Chernyshóv, addressing the aide-de-camp, and looking inquiringly towards the door leading to the cabinet.

"*Sa majesté vient de rentrer,*"[2] replied the aide-de-camp, evidently enjoying the sound of his own voice, and, stepping so softly and steadily that had a tumbler of water been placed on his head none of it would have been spilt, he approached the noiselessly opening door and, his whole body evincing reverence for the spot he was about to visit, he disappeared.

Dolgorúky meanwhile opened his portfolio to see that it contained the necessary papers, while Chernyshóv, frowning, paced up and

[2] His majesty has just returned.

down to restore the circulation in his numbed feet, and thought over what he was about to report to the Emperor. He was near the door of the cabinet when it opened again, and the aide-de-camp, even more radiant and respectful than before, came out and with a gesture invited the minister and his assistant to enter.

The Winter Palace had been rebuilt after the fire some considerable time before this; but Nicholas was still occupying rooms in the upper story. The cabinet in which he received the reports of his ministers and other high officials, was a very lofty apartment with four large windows. A big portrait of the Emperor Alexander I hung on the front wall. Between the windows stood two bureaux. By the walls stood several chairs. In the middle of the room was an enormous writing-table, with an arm-chair before it for Nicholas, and other chairs for those to whom he gave audience.

Nicholas sat at the table in a black coat with shoulder-straps but no epaulets, his enormous body—of which the overgrown stomach was tightly laced in—was thrown back, and he gazed at the newcomers with fixed, lifeless eyes.

His long, pale face, with its enormous receding forehead between the tufts of hair which were brushed forward and skilfully joined to the wig that covered his bald patch, was specially cold and stony that day. His eyes, always dim, looked duller than usual; the compressed lips under his upturned moustaches, and his fat freshly-shaven cheeks—on which symmetrical sausage-shaped bits of whiskers had been left—supported by the high collar, and his chin which also pressed upon it, gave to his face a dissatisfied and even irate expression. The cause of the bad mood he was in was fatigue. The fatigue was due to the fact that he had been to a masquerade the night before, and while walking about as was his wont, in his Horse Guards' uniform with a bird on the helmet, among the public which crowded round and timidly made way for his enormous, self-assured figure, he again met the mask who at the previous masquerade, by her whiteness, her beautiful figure, and her tender voice had aroused his senile sensuality. She had then disappeared, after promising to meet him at the next masquerade.

At yesterday's masquerade she had come up

to him, and he had not let her go again, but had led her to the box specially kept ready for that purpose, where he could be alone with her. Having arrived in silence at the door of the box, Nicholas looked round to find the attendant, but he was not there. Nicholas frowned, and pushed the door open himself, letting the lady enter first.

"*Il y a quelqu'un!*"[3] said the mask, stopping short.

The box actually was occupied. On the small velvet-covered sofa sat, close together, an Uhlan officer and a pretty, curly-haired, fair young woman in a domino, who had removed her mask. On catching sight of the angry figure of Nicholas, drawn up to its full height, the fair-haired woman quickly covered her face with her mask; but the Uhlan officer, rigid with fear, without rising from the sofa, gazed at Nicholas with fixed eyes.

Used as he was to the terror he inspired in people, that terror always pleased Nicholas, and by way of contrast he sometimes liked to astound those who were plunged in terror by

[3] There's some one there!

addressing kindly words to them. He did so on this occasion.

"Well, friend!" said he to the officer, rigid with fear, "you are younger than I, and might give up your place to me."

The officer jumped to his feet, and growing pale and then red and bending almost double, he followed his partner silently out of the box, and Nicholas remained alone with his lady.

She proved to be a pretty, twenty-year old virgin, the daughter of a Swedish governess. She told Nicholas how, when quite a child, she had fallen in love with him from his portraits; how she adored him, and made up her mind to attract his attention at any cost. Now she had succeeded, and wanted nothing more—so she said.

The girl was taken to the place where Nicholas usually had rendezvous with women, and there he spent more than an hour with her.

When he returned to his room that night and lay on the hard narrow bed about which he prided himself, and covered himself with the cloak which he considered to be (and spoke of as being) as famous as Napoleon's hat, it was

long before he could fall asleep. He thought now of the frightened and elated expression on that girl's fair face, and now of the full, powerful shoulders of his regular mistress, Nelídova, and he compared the two. That profligacy in a married man was a bad thing did not once enter his head; and he would have been greatly surprised had any one censured him for it. Yet, though convinced that he had acted properly, some kind of unpleasant after-taste remained behind, and to stifle that feeling he began to dwell on a thought that always tranquillised him—the thought of his own greatness.

Though he fell asleep very late, he rose before eight, and after attending to his toilet in the usual way—rubbing his big well-fed body all over with ice—and saying his prayers (repeating those he had been used to from childhood—the prayer to the Virgin, the Apostles' Creed, and the Lord's Prayer, without attaching any kind of meaning to the words he uttered), he went out through the smaller portico of the palace on to the embankment, in his military cloak and cap.

On the embankment he met a student in the

uniform of the School of Jurisprudence, who was as enormous as himself. On recognising the uniform of that School, which he disliked for its freedom of thought, Nicholas frowned; but the stature of the student, and the painstaking manner in which he drew himself up and saluted, ostentatiously sticking out his elbow, mollified Nicholas's displeasure.

"Your name?" said he.

"Polosátov, your Imperial Majesty."

" . . . fine fellow!"

The student continued to stand with his hand lifted to his hat.

Nicholas stopped.

"Do you wish to enter the army?"

"Not at all, your Imperial Majesty."

"Blockhead!" And Nicholas turned away and continued his walk, and began uttering aloud the first words that came into his head.

"Kopervine . . . Kopervine—" he repeated several times (it was the name of yesterday's girl). "Horrid . . . horrid—" He did not think what he said, but stifled his feelings by listening to it.

"Yes, what would Russia do without me?"

said he, feeling his former dissatisfaction returning; "yes, what would—not Russia alone, but Europe be, without me?" and calling to mind the weakness and stupidity of his brother-in-law, the King of Prussia, he shook his head.

As he was returning to the small portico, he saw the carriage of Helena Pávlovna,[4] with a red-liveried footman, approaching the Saltykóv entrance of the palace.

Helena Pávlovna was to him the personification of that futile class of people who discussed not merely science and poetry, but even the ways of governing men: imagining that they could govern themselves better than he, Nicholas, governed them! He knew that however much he crushed such people, they reappeared again and again; and he recalled his brother, Michael Pávlovich, who had died not long before. A feeling of sadness and vexation came over him, and with a dark frown he again began whispering the first words that came into his head. He only ceased doing this when he re-entered the palace.

[4] Widow of Nicholas's brother Michael: a clever, well-educated woman, interested in science, art, and public affairs.

On reaching his apartments he smoothed his whiskers and the hair on his temples and the wig on his bald patch, and twisted his moustaches upwards in front of the mirror; and then went straight to the cabinet in which he received reports.

He first received Chernyshóv, who at once saw by his face, and especially by his eyes, that Nicholas was in a particularly bad humour that day; and knowing about the adventure of the night before, he understood the cause. Having coldly greeted Chernyshóv and invited him to sit down, Nicholas fixed on him a lifeless gaze. The first matter Chernyshóv reported upon was a case, which had just been discovered, of embezzlement by commissariat officials; the next was the movement of troops on the Prussian frontier; then came a list of rewards to be given at the New Year to some people omitted from a former list; then Vorontsóv's report about Hadji Murád; and lastly some unpleasant business concerning an attempt by a student of the Academy of Medicine on the life of a professor.

Nicholas heard the report of the embezzle-

ment silently, with compressed lips, his large white hand—with one ring on the fourth finger—stroking some sheets of paper, and his eyes steadily fixed on Chernyshóv's forehead and on the tuft of hair above it.

Nicholas was convinced that everybody stole. He knew he would have to punish the commissariat officials now, and decided to send them all to serve in the ranks; but he also knew that this would not prevent those who succeeded them from acting in the same way. It was a characteristic of officials to steal, and it was his duty to punish them for doing so; and tired as he was of that duty he conscientiously performed it.

"It seems there is only one honest man in Russia!" said he.

Chernyshóv at once understood that this one honest man was Nicholas himself, and smiled approvingly.

"It looks like it, your Imperial Majesty," said he.

"Leave it—I will give a decision," said Nicholas, taking the document and putting it on the left side of the table.

Then Chernyshóv reported about the rewards to be given, and about moving the army on the Prussian frontier.

Nicholas looked over the list and struck out some names; and then briefly and firmly gave orders to move two divisions to the Prussian frontier. Nicholas could not forgive the King of Prussia for granting a Constitution to his people after the events of 1848, and therefore, while expressing most friendly feelings to his brother-in-law in letters and conversation, he considered it necessary to keep an army near the frontier in case of need. He might want to use these troops to defend his brother-in-law's throne if the people of Prussia rebelled (Nicholas saw a readiness for rebellion everywhere) as he had used troops to suppress the rising in Hungary a few years previously. Another reason why troops were wanted, was to give more weight and influence to the advice he gave to the King of Prussia.

"Yes—what would Russia be like now, if it were not for me?" he again thought.

"Well, what else is there?" said he.

"A courier from the Caucasus," said

Chernyshóv, and he reported what Vorontsóv had written about Hadji Murád's surrender.

"Dear me!" said Nicholas. "Well, it's a good beginning!"

"Evidently the plan devised by your Majesty begins to bear fruit," said Chernyshóv.

This approval of his strategic talents was particularly pleasant to Nicholas, because, though he prided himself on those talents, at the bottom of his heart he knew that they did not really exist; and he now desired to hear more detailed praise of himself.

"How do you mean?" he asked.

"I understand it this way—that if your Majesty's plans had been adopted long ago, and we had moved forward steadily though slowly, cutting down forests and destroying the supplies of food, the Caucasus would have been subjugated long ago. I attribute Hadji Murád's surrender entirely to his having come to the conclusion that they can hold out no longer."

"True," said Nicholas.

Although the plan of a gradual advance into the enemy's territory by means of felling for-

ests and destroying the food supplies was Ermólov's and Velyamínov's plan, and was quite contrary to Nicholas's own plan of seizing Shamil's place of residence and destroying that nest of robbers—which was the plan on which the Dargo expedition in 1845 (that cost so many lives) had been undertaken—Nicholas nevertheless also attributed to himself the plan of a slow advance and a systematic felling of forests and devastation of the country. It would seem that to believe that the plan of a slow movement by felling forests and destroying food supplies was his own, necessitated the hiding of the fact that he had insisted on quite contrary operations in 1845. But he did not hide it, and was proud of the plan of the 1845 expedition, and also of the plan of a slow advance—though evidently the two were contrary to one another. Continual brazen flattery from everybody round him, in the teeth of obvious facts, had brought him to such a state that he no longer saw his own inconsistencies or measured his actions and words by reality logic or even by simple common sense; but was quite convinced that all his orders, however

senseless, unjust and mutually contradictory they might be, became reasonable, just and mutually accordant simply because he gave them. His decision in the case next reported to him—that of the student of the Academy of Medicine—was of that senseless kind.

The case was as follows: A young man who had twice failed in his examinations was being examined a third time, and when the examiner again would not pass him, the young man, whose nerves were deranged, considering this to be an injustice, in a paroxysm of fury seized a penknife from the table and, rushing at the professor, inflicted on him several trifling wounds.

"What's his name?" asked Nicholas.

"Bzhezóvsky."

"A Pole?"

"Of Polish descent, and a Roman Catholic," answered Chernyshóv.

Nicholas frowned. He had done much evil to the Poles. To justify that evil he had to be certain that all Poles were rascals, and he considered them to be such, and hated them accordingly in proportion to the evil he had done to them.

"Wait a little," he said, closing his eyes and bowing his head.

Chernyshóv, having more than once heard Nicholas say so, knew that when the Emperor had to take a decision, it was only necessary for him to concentrate his attention for a few moments, and the spirit moved him, and the best possible decision presented itself, as though an inner voice had told him what to do. He was now thinking how most fully to satisfy the feeling of hatred against the Poles which this incident had stirred up within him; and the inner voice suggested the following decision. He took the report and in his large handwriting wrote on its margin, with three orthographical mistakes:

"Diserves deth, but, thank God, we have no capitle punishment, and it is not for me to introduce it. Make him run the gauntlet of a thousand men twelve times.—Nicholas."

He signed, adding his unnaturally huge flourish.

Nicholas knew that twelve thousand strokes with the regulation rods were not only certain death with torture, but were a superfluous

cruelty, for five thousand strokes were sufficient to kill the strongest man. But it pleased him to be ruthlessly cruel, and it also pleased him to think that we have abolished capital punishment in Russia.

Having written his decision about the student, he pushed it across to Chernyshóv.

"There," he said, "read it."

Chernyshóv read it, and bowed his head as a sign of respectful amazement at the wisdom of the decision.

"Yes, and let all the students be present on the drill ground at the punishment," added Nicholas.

"It will do them good! I will abolish this revolutionary spirit, and will tear it up by the roots!" he thought.

"It shall be done," replied Chernyshóv; and after a short pause he straightened the tuft on his forehead and returned to the Caucasian report.

"What do you command me to write in reply to Prince Vorontsóv's despatch?"

"To keep firmly to my system of destroying the dwellings and food supplies in Chechnya,

and to harass them by raids," answered Nicholas.

"And what are your Majesty's commands with reference to Hadji Murád?" asked Chernyshóv.

"Why, Vorontsóv writes that he wants to make use of him in the Caucasus."

"Is it not dangerous?" said Chernyshóv, avoiding Nicholas's gaze. "Prince Vorontsóv is, I'm afraid, too confiding."

"And you—what do you think?" asked Nicholas sharply, detecting Chernyshóv's intention of presenting Vorontsóv's decision in an unfavourable light.

"Well, I should have thought it would be safer to deport him to Central Russia."

"You would have thought!" said Nicholas ironically. "But I don't think so, and agree with Vorontsóv. Write to him accordingly."

"It shall be done," said Chernyshóv, rising and bowing himself out.

Dolgorúky also bowed himself out, having during the whole audience only uttered a few words (in reply to a question from Nicholas) about the movement of the army.

After Chernyshóv Nicholas received Bíbikov, General-Governor of the Western Provinces. Having expressed his approval of the measures taken by Bíbikov against the mutinous peasants who did not wish to accept the Orthodox Faith, he ordered him to have all those who did not submit tried by court-martial. That was equivalent to sentencing them to run the gauntlet. He also ordered the editor of a newspaper to be sent to serve in the ranks of the army for publishing information about the transfer of several thousand State peasants to the Imperial estates.

"I do this because I consider it necessary," said Nicholas, "and I will not allow it to be discussed."

Bíbikov saw the cruelty of the order concerning the Uniate [5] peasants, and the injustice of transferring State peasants (the only free peasants in Russia in those days) to the Crown, which meant making them serfs of the Imperial family. But it was impossible to express dissent. Not to agree with Nicholas's decisions

[5] The Uniates acknowledge the Pope of Rome, though in other respects they are in accord with the Orthodox Russo-Greek Church.

would have meant the loss of that brilliant position which it had cost Bíbikov forty years to attain, and which he now enjoyed; and he therefore submissively bowed his dark head (already touched with grey) to indicate his submission and his readiness to fulfil the cruel, insensate and dishonest supreme will.

Having dismissed Bíbikov, Nicholas, with a sense of duty well fulfilled, stretched himself, glanced at the clock, and went to get ready to go out. Having put on a uniform with epaulets Orders and a ribbon, he went out into the reception hall, where more than a hundred persons—men in uniforms and women in elegant low-necked dresses, all standing in the places assigned to them—awaited his arrival with agitation.

He came out to them with a lifeless look in his eyes, his chest expanded, his stomach bulging out above and below its bandages; and feeling everybody's gaze tremulously and obsequiously fixed upon him, he assumed an even more triumphant air. When his eyes met those of people he knew, remembering who was who, he stopped and addressed a few words to them,

sometimes in Russian and sometimes in French, and transfixing them with his cold glassy eye, listened to what they said.

Having received all the New Year congratulations, he passed on to church. God, through His servants the priests, greeted and praised Nicholas just as worldly people did; and weary as he was of these greetings and praises, Nicholas duly accepted them. All this was as it should be, because the welfare and happiness of the whole world depended on him; and though the matter wearied him, he still did not refuse the universe his assistance.

When at the end of the service the magnificently arrayed deacon, his long hair crimped and carefully combed, began the chant *Many Years,* which was heartily caught up by the splendid choir, Nicholas looked round and noticed Nelídova, with her fine shoulders, standing by a window, and he decided the comparison with yesterday's girl in her favour.

After Mass he went to the Empress and spent a few minutes in the bosom of his family, joking with the children and with his wife. Then,

passing through the Hermitage,[6] he visited the Minister of the Court, Volkónsky, and among other things ordered him to pay out of a special fund a yearly pension to the mother of yesterday's girl. From there he went for his customary drive.

Dinner that day was served in the Pompeian Hall. Besides the younger sons of Nicholas and Michael, there were also invited Baron Lieven, Count Rjévsky, Dolgorúky, the Prussian Ambassador, and the King of Prussia's aide-de-camp.

While waiting for the appearance of the Emperor and Empress, an interesting conversation took place between Baron Lieven and the Prussian Ambassador concerning the disquieting news from Poland.

"*La Pologne et le Caucase, ce sont les deux cautères de la Russie,*"[7] said Lieven. "*Il nous faut* 100,000 *hommes à peu près, dans chaqu'un de ces deux pays.*"

[6] A celebrated museum and picture gallery in St. Petersburg, adjoining the Winter Palace.

[7] "Poland and the Caucasus are Russia's two sores. We need about 100,000 men in each of those two countries."

The Ambassador expressed a fictitious surprise that it should be so.

"*Vous dites, la Pologne—*"[8] began the Ambassador.

"*Oh oui, c'était un coup de maître de Metternich, de nous en avoir laissé l'embarras. . . .*"

At this point the Empress, with her trembling head and fixed smile, entered, followed by Nicholas.

At dinner Nicholas spoke of Hadji Murád's surrender, and said that the war in the Caucasus must now soon come to an end in consequence of the measures he was taking to limit the scope of the mountaineers, by felling their forests and by his system of erecting a series of small forts.

The Ambassador, having exchanged a rapid glance with the aide-de-camp—to whom he had only that morning spoken about Nicholas's unfortunate weakness for considering himself a great strategist—warmly praised this plan,

[8] "You say that Poland—" "Oh, yes, it was a masterstroke of Metternich's to leave us the bother of it. . . ."

which once more demonstrated Nicholas's great strategic ability.

After dinner Nicholas drove to the ballet, where hundreds of women marched round in tights and scant clothing. One of them specially attracted him, and he had the German ballet master sent for, and gave orders that a diamond ring should be presented to him.

The next day, when Chernyshóv came with his report, Nicholas again confirmed his order to Vorontsóv—that now that Hadji Murád had surrendered, the Chechens should be more actively harassed than ever, and the cordon round them tightened.

Chernyshóv wrote in that sense to Vorontsóv; and another courier, overdriving more horses and bruising the faces of more drivers, galloped to Tiflis.

XVI

In obedience to this command of Nicholas, a raid was immediately made in Chechnya that same month, January 1852.

The detachment ordered for the raid consisted of four infantry battalions, two companies of Cossacks, and eight guns. The column marched along the road, and on both sides of it in a continuous line, now mounting, now descending, marched *Jägers* in high boots, sheepskin coats and tall caps, with rifles on their shoulders and cartridges in their belts.

As usual when marching through a hostile country, silence was observed as far as possible. Only occasionally the guns jingled, jolting across a ditch, or an artillery horse, not understanding that silence was ordered, snorted or neighed, or an angry commander shouted in a hoarse subdued voice to his subordinates that the line was spreading out too much, or marching too near or too far from the column.

Only once was the silence broken, when, from a bramble patch between the line and the column, a gazelle with a white breast and grey back jumped out, followed by a ram of the same colour with small backward-curving horns. Doubling up their forelegs at each big bound they took, the beautiful and timid creatures came so close to the column that some of the soldiers rushed after them, laughing and shouting, intending to bayonet them, but the gazelles turned back, slipped through the line of *Jägers*, and, pursued by a few horsemen and the company's dogs, fled like birds to the mountains.

It was still winter, but towards noon, when the column (which had started early in the morning) had gone three miles, it had risen high enough and was powerful enough to make the men quite hot, and its rays were so bright that it was painful to look at the shining steel of the bayonets, or at the reflections—like little suns—on the brass of the cannons.

The clear rapid stream the detachment had just crossed lay behind, and in front were tilled fields and meadows in the shallow valleys. Further in front were the dark mysterious for-

est-clad hills, with crags rising beyond them, and further still, on the lofty horizon, were the ever-beautiful ever-changing snowy peaks that played with the light like diamonds.

In a black coat and tall cap, shouldering his sword, at the head of the 5th Company marched Butler, a tall handsome officer who had recently exchanged from the Guards. He was filled with a buoyant sense of the joy of living, and also of the danger of death, and with a wish for action, and the consciousness of being part of an immense whole directed by a single will. This was the second time he was going into action, and he thought how in a moment they would be fired at, and that he would not only not stoop when the shells flew overhead, nor heed the whistle of the bullets, but would even carry his head more erect than before, and would look round at his comrades and at the soldiers with smiling eyes, and would begin to talk in a perfectly calm voice about quite other matters.

The detachment turned off the good road on to a little-used one that crossed a stubbly maize field, and it was drawing near the forest when

—they could not see whence—with an ominous whistle, a shell flew past amid the baggage wagons, and tore up the ground in the field by the roadside.

"It is beginning," said Butler, with a bright smile to a comrade who was walking beside him.

And so it was. After the shell, from under the shelter of the forest appeared a thick crowd of mounted Chechens with banners. In the midst of the crowd could be seen a large green banner, and an old and very far-sighted sergeant-major informed the short-sighted Butler that Shamil himself must be there. The horsemen came down the hill and appeared to the right, at the highest part of the valley nearest the detachment, and began to descend. A little general in a thick black coat and tall cap rode up to Butler's company on his ambler, and ordered him to the right to encounter the descending horsemen. Butler quickly led his company in the direction indicated, but before he reached the valley he heard two cannon shots behind him. He looked round: two clouds of grey smoke had risen above two cannons and

were spreading along the valley. The mountaineer's horsemen—who had evidently not expected to meet artillery—retired. Butler's company began firing at them, and the whole ravine was filled with the smoke of powder. Only higher up, above the ravine, could the mountaineers be seen hurriedly retreating, though still firing back at the Cossacks who pursued them. The company followed the mountaineers further, and on the slope of a second ravine they came in view of an *aoul.*

Following the Cossacks, Butler with his company entered the *aoul* at a run. None of its inhabitants were there. The soldiers were ordered to burn the corn and the hay, as well as the *sáklyas,* and the whole *aoul* was soon filled with pungent smoke, amid which the soldiers rushed about, dragging out of the *sáklyas* what they could find, and above all catching and shooting the fowls the mountaineers had not been able to take away with them.

The officers sat down at some distance beyond the smoke, and lunched and drank. The sergeant-major brought them some honeycombs on a board. There was no sign of any Chechens,

and early in the afternoon the order was given to retreat. The companies formed into a column behind the *aoul,* and Butler happened to be in the rearguard. As soon as they started Chechens appeared, and, following the detachment, fired at it.

When the detachment came out into an open space, the mountaineers pursued it no further. Not one of Butler's company had been wounded, and he returned in a most happy and energetic mood. When, after fording the same stream it had crossed in the morning, the detachment spread over the maize fields and the meadows, the singers [1] of each company came forward, and songs filled the air.

"Very diff'rent, very diff'rent, *Jägers* are, *Jägers* are!" sang Butler's singers, and his horse stepped merrily to the music. Trezórka, the shaggy grey dog of the company, with his tail curled up, ran in front with an air of responsibility, like a commander. Butler felt buoyant calm and joyful. War presented itself to him as consisting only in his exposing himself to danger and to possible death, and thereby

[1] Each regiment had a choir of singers.

gaining rewards and the respect of his comrades here, as well as of his friends in Russia. Strange to say, his imagination never pictured the other aspect of war: the death and wounds of the soldiers officers and mountaineers. To retain this poetic conception he even unconsciously avoided looking at the dead and wounded. So that day, when we had three dead and twelve wounded, he passed by a corpse lying on its back, and only saw with one eye the strange position of the waxen hand and a dark red spot on the head, and did not stop to look. The hillsmen appeared to him only as mounted *dzhigits,* from whom one had to defend oneself.

"You see, my dear sir," said his major in an interval between two songs, "it's not as with you in Petersburg—'Eyes right! Eyes left!' Here we have done our job; and now we go home, and Másha will set a pie and some nice cabbage soup before us. That's life; don't you think so?—Now then! *As the Dawn was Breaking!*" he called for his favourite song.

There was no wind, the air was fresh and

clear, and so transparent that the snow hills nearly a hundred miles away seemed quite near, and in the intervals between the songs the regular sound of the footsteps and the jingle of the guns was heard as a background on which each song began and ended. The song that was being sung in Butler's company was composed by a cadet in honour of the regiment, and went to a dance tune. The chorus was, "Very diff'rent, very diff'rent, *Jägers* are, *Jägers* are!"

Butler rode beside the officer next in command above him, Major Petróv, with whom he lived; and he felt he could not be thankful enough to have exchanged from the Guards and come to the Caucasus. His chief reason for exchanging was that he had lost all he had at cards, and was afraid that if he remained there he would be unable to resist playing, though he had nothing more to lose. Now all this was over, his life was quite changed, and was such a pleasant and brave one! He forgot that he was ruined, and forgot his unpaid debts. The Caucasus, the war, the soldiers, the officers, those tipsy brave good-natured fellows, and

Major Petróv himself, all seemed so delightful that sometimes it appeared too good to be true that he was not in Petersburg—in a room filled with tobacco-smoke, turning down the corners of cards and gambling, hating the holder of the bank, and feeling a dull pain in his head—but was really here in this glorious region among these brave Caucasians.

The Major and the daughter of a surgeon's orderly, formerly known as Másha, but now generally called by the more respectful name of Mary Dmítrievna, lived together as man and wife. Mary Dmítrievna was a handsome fair-haired very freckled childless woman of thirty. Whatever her past may have been, she was now the major's faithful companion, and looked after him like a nurse—a very necessary matter, since the Major often drank himself into oblivion.

When they reached the fort everything happened as the Major had foreseen. Mary Dmítrievna gave him, Butler, and two other officers of the detachment who had been invited, a nourishing and tasty dinner, and the Major ate and drank till he was unable to

speak, and then went off to his room to sleep.

Butler, tired but contented, having drunk rather more Chikhír wine than was good for him, went to his bedroom, and hardly had he time to undress before, placing his hand under his handsome curly head, he fell into a sound, dreamless, and unbroken sleep.

XVII

The *aoul* which had been destroyed was that in which Hadji Murád had spent the night before he went over to the Russians. Sado, with his family, had left the *aoul* on the approach of the Russian detachment; and when he returned he found his *sáklya* in ruins—the roof fallen in, the door and the posts supporting the pent-house burned, and the interior filthy. His son, the handsome, bright-eyed boy who had gazed with such ecstasy at Hadji Murád, was brought dead to the mosque on a horse covered with a *búrka.* He had been stabbed in the back with a bayonet. The dignified woman who had served Hadji Murád when he was at the house now stood over her son's body, her smock torn in front, her withered old breasts exposed, her hair down; and she dug her nails into her face till it bled, and wailed incessantly. Sado, with pickaxe and spade, had gone with his relatives to dig a grave for his son. The old grand-

father sat by the wall of the ruined *sáklya,* cutting a stick and gazing solidly in front of him. He had only just returned from the apiary. The two stacks of hay there had been burnt; the apricot and cherry trees he had planted and reared were broken and scorched; and, worse still, all the beehives and bees were burnt. The wailing of the women and of the little children who cried with their mothers, mingled with the lowing of the hungry cattle, for whom there was no food. The bigger children did not play, but followed their elders with frightened eyes. The fountain was polluted, evidently on purpose, so that the water could not be used. The mosque was polluted in the same way, and the Mullah and his assistants were cleaning it out. No one spoke of hatred of the Russians. The feeling experienced by all the Chechens, from the youngest to the oldest, was stronger than hate. It was not hatred, for they did not regard those Russian dogs as human beings; but it was such repulsion disgust and perplexity at the senseless cruelty of these creatures, that the desire to exterminate them—like the desire to exterminate rats, poisonous spiders, or

wolves—was as natural an instinct as that of self-preservation.

The inhabitants of the *aoul* were confronted by the choice of remaining there and restoring with frightful effort what had been produced with such labour and had been so lightly and senselessly destroyed, facing every moment the possibility of a repetition of what had happened, or—contrary to their religion and despite the repulsion and contempt they felt—to submit to the Russians. The old men prayed, and unanimously decided to send envoys to Shamil, asking him for help. Then they immediately set to work to restore what had been destroyed.

XVIII

On the morning after the raid, not very early, Butler left the house by the back porch, meaning to take a stroll and a breath of fresh air before breakfast, which he usually had with Petróv. The sun had already risen above the hills, and it was painful to look at the brightly lit-up white walls of the houses on the right side of the street; but then, as always, it was cheerful and soothing to look to the left, at the dark receding ascending forest-clad hills, and at the dim line of snow peaks which as usual pretended to be clouds. Butler looked at these mountains, inhaled deep breaths and rejoiced that he was alive, and that it was just he himself that was alive, and that he lived in this beautiful place.

He was also rather pleased that he had behaved so well in yesterday's affair, both during the advance and especially during the retreat, when things were pretty hot; and he was also pleased to remember how on their return

after the raid Másha (or Mary Dmítrievna), Petróv's mistress, had treated them at dinner, and had been particularly nice and simple with everybody, but specially kind—as he thought—to him.

Mary Dmítrievna, with her thick plait of hair, her broad shoulders, her high bosom, and the radiant smile on her kindly freckled face, involuntarily attracted Butler, who was a strong young bachelor; and it even seemed to him that she wanted him; but he considered that that would be wrong towards his good-natured simple-hearted comrade, and he maintained a simple respectful attitude towards her, and was pleased with himself for so doing.

He was thinking of this when his meditations were disturbed by the tramp of many horses' hoofs along the dusty road in front of him, as if several men were riding that way. He looked up, and saw at the end of the street a group of horsemen coming towards him at a walk. In front of a score of Cossacks, rode two men: one in a white Circassian coat, with a tall turban on his head; the other, an officer in the Russian service, dark, with an aquiline nose, and

much silver on his uniform and weapons. The man with the turban rode a fine chestnut horse with mane and tail of a lighter shade, a small head, and beautiful eyes. The officer's was a large handsome Karabákh horse. Butler, a lover of horses, immediately recognised the great strength of the first horse, and stopped to learn who these people were.

The officer addressed him. "This the house of commanding officer?" he asked, his foreign accent and his words betraying his foreign origin.

Butler replied that it was. "And who is that?" he added, coming nearer to the officer and indicating the man with the turban.

"That, Hadji Murád: He come here to stay with the commander," said the officer.

Butler knew about Hadji Murád, and about his having come over to the Russians; but he had not at all expected to see him here in this little fort. Hadji Murád gave him a friendly look.

"Good day, *kotkildy*," said Butler, repeating the Tartar greeting he had learnt.

"*Saubul!*" (Be well!) replied Hadji Murád,

nodding. He rode up to Butler and held out his hand, from two fingers of which hung his whip.

"Are you the chief?" he asked.

"No, the chief is in here. I will go and call him," said Butler, addressing the officer; and he went up the steps and pushed the door. But the door of the visitors' entrance—as Mary Dmítrievna called it—was locked; and as it still remained closed after he had knocked, Butler went round to the back door. He called his orderly, but received no reply; and finding neither of the two orderlies, he went into the kitchen, where Mary Dmítrievna—flushed, with a kerchief tied round her head, and her sleeves rolled up on her plump white arms—was rolling pastry, white as her hands, and cutting it into small pieces to make pies of.

"Where have the orderlies gone to?" asked Butler.

"Gone to drink," replied Mary Dmítrievna. "What do you want?"

"To have the front door opened. You have a whole horde of mountaineers in front of your house. Hadji Murád has come!"

"Invent something else!" said Mary Dmítrievna, smiling.

"I am not joking, he is really waiting by the porch!"

"Is it really true?" said she.

"Why should I want to deceive you? Go and see; he's just at the porch!"

"Dear me, here's a go!" said Mary Dmítrievna, pulling down her sleeves, and putting up her hand to feel whether the hairpins in her thick plait were all in order. "Then I will go and wake Iván Matvéitch."

"No, I'll go myself. And you, Bondarénko, go and open the door," said he to Petróv's orderly, who had just appeared.

"Well, so much the better!" said Mary Dmítrievna, and returned to her work.

When he heard that Hadji Murád had come to his house, Iván Matvéitch Petróv, the Major, who had already heard that Hadji Murád was in Grózny, was not at all surprised; and sitting up in bed he made a cigarette, lit it, and began to dress, loudly clearing his throat, and grumbling at the authorities who had sent "that devil" to him.

When he was ready, he told his orderly to bring him some medicine. The orderly knew that "medicine" meant vódka, and brought some.

"There is nothing so bad as mixing," muttered the Major, when he had drunk the vódka and taken a bite of rye bread. "Yesterday I drank a little Chikhír, and now I have a headache. . . . Well, I'm ready," said he, and went to the parlour, into which Butler had already shown Hadji Murád and the officer who accompanied him.

The officer handed the Major orders from the commander of the Left Flank, to the effect that he should receive Hadji Murád, and should allow him to have intercourse with the mountaineers through spies, but was on no account to let him leave the fort without a convoy of Cossacks.

Having read the order, the Major looked intently at Hadji Murád, and again scrutinised the paper. After passing his eyes several times from one to the other in this manner, he at last fixed them on Hadji Murád and said:

"*Yakshí, Bek; yakshí!*" (Very well, sir, very

well!) Let him stay here, and tell him I have orders not to let him out—and that what is commanded is sacred! Well, Butler, where do you think we'd better lodge him? Shall we put him in the office?"

Butler had not time to answer before Mary Dmítrievna—who had come from the kitchen and was standing in the doorway—said to the Major,—

"Why? Keep him here! We will give him the guest chamber and the storeroom. Then at any rate he will be within sight," said she, glancing at Hadji Murád; but meeting his eyes she turned quickly away.

"Well, you know, I think Mary Dmítrievna is right," said Butler.

"Now then, now then; get away! Women have no business here," said the Major, frowning.

During the whole of this discussion, Hadji Murád sat with his hand on the hilt of his dagger, and a faint smile of contempt on his lips. He said it was all the same to him where he lodged, and that he wanted nothing but what the Sirdar had permitted—namely to have com-

munication with the mountaineers; and that he therefore wished that they should be allowed to come to him.

The Major said this should be done, and asked Butler to entertain the visitors till something could be got for them to eat, and their rooms could be prepared. Meantime he himself would go across to the office, to write what was necessary, and to give some orders.

Hadji Murád's relations with his new acquaintances were at once very clearly defined. From the first he was repelled by, and felt contempt for, the Major, to whom he always behaved very haughtily. Mary Dmítrievna, who prepared and served up his food, pleased him particularly. He liked her simplicity, and especially the—to him—foreign type of beauty, and he was influenced by the attraction she felt towards him and unconsciously conveyed. He tried not to look at her or speak to her; but his eyes involuntarily turned towards her and followed her movements. With Butler, from their first acquaintance, he immediately made friends, and talked much and willingly with him about his life, telling him of his own, and

communicating to him the news the spies brought him of his family's condition; and even consulting him about how he ought to act.

The news he received through the spies was not good. During the first four days of his stay in the fort they came to see him twice, and both times brought bad news.

XIX

Hadji Murád's family had been removed to Vedenó soon after his desertion to the Russians, and were there kept under guard, awaiting Shamil's decision. The women: his old mother Patimát, and his two wives with their five little children, were kept under guard in the *sáklya* of the officer, Ibrahim Raschid; while Hadji Murád's son, Yusúf, a youth of eighteen, was put in prison: that is, into a pit more than seven feet deep, together with seven criminals who like himself were awaiting a decision as to their fate.

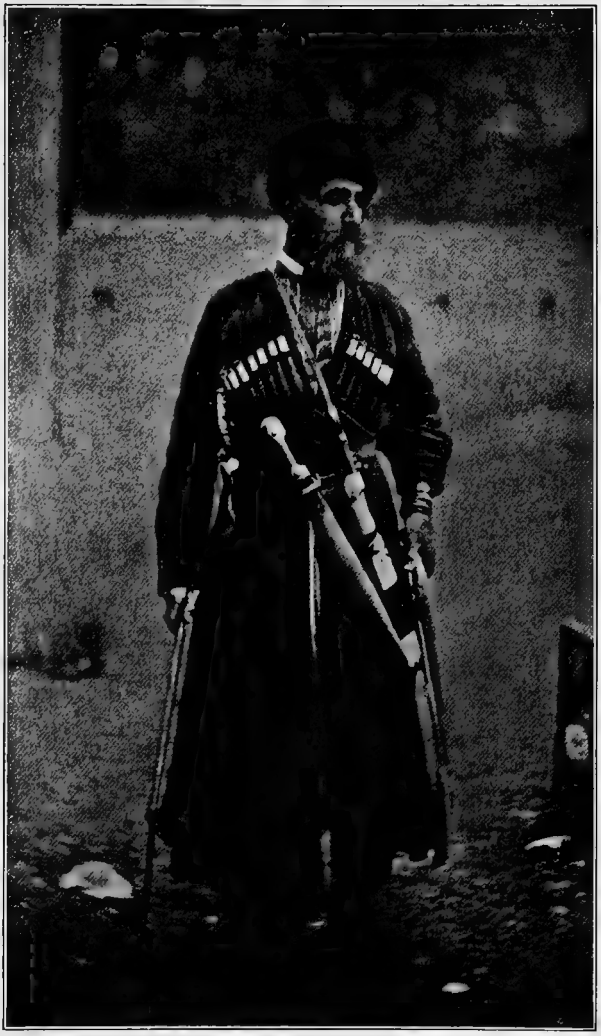
The decision was delayed, because Shamil was away on a campaign against the Russians.

On 6 January 1852, he returned to Vedenó, after a battle in which, according to the Russians, he had been vanquished, and had fled to Vedenó; but in which, according to him and all the *murids,* he had been victorious, and had repulsed the Russians. In this battle he him-

self fired his rifle—a thing he seldom did—and, drawing his sword, would have charged straight at the Russians, had not the *murids* who accompanied him held him back. Two of them were killed on the spot, at Shamil's side.

It was noon when Shamil—surrounded by a party of *murids* who caracoled around him, firing their rifles and pistols and continually singing *Lya illyah il Allah!*—rode up to his place of residence.

All the inhabitants of the large *aoul* were in the street or on their roofs to meet their ruler; and as a sign of triumph they also fired off rifles and pistols. Shamil rode a white arab steed, which pulled at its bit as it approached the house. The horse's equipment was of the simplest, without gold or silver ornaments, a delicately worked red leather bridle with a stripe down the middle, metal cup-shaped stirrups, and a red saddle-cloth showing a little from under the saddle. The Imám wore a brown cloth cloak, lined with black fur showing at the neck and sleeves, and was tightly girded round his thin long waist with a black strap which held a dagger. On his head he



A Circassian.

wore a tall cap with flat crown and black tassel; round it was wound a white turban, one end of which hung down on his neck. He wore green slippers and black leggings, trimmed with plain braid.

In fact, the Imám wore nothing bright—no gold or silver—and his tall erect powerful figure, clothed in garments without any ornaments, surrounded by *murids* with gold and silver on their clothes and weapons, produced on the people just the impression and influence that he desired and knew how to produce. His pale face, framed by a closely-trimmed reddish beard, with his small eyes always screwed up, was as immovable as though hewn out of stone. As he rode through the *aoul* he felt the gaze of a thousand eyes turned eagerly on him, but his eyes looked at no one.

Hadji Murád's wives had come out into the penthouse with the rest of the inmates of the *sáklya,* to see the Imám's entry. Only Patimát, Hadji Murád's old mother did not go out, but remained sitting on the floor of the *sáklya* with her grey hair down, her long arms encircling her thin knees, blinking with her scorch-

ing black eyes as she watched the dying embers in the fireplace. She, like her son, had always hated Shamil; and now she hated him more than ever, and did not wish to see him. Neither did Hadji Murád's son see Shamil's triumphal entry. Sitting in his dark and fetid pit, he only heard the firing and singing, and endured tortures such as can only be felt by the young who are full of vitality and deprived of freedom. He only saw his unfortunate dirty and exhausted fellow prisoners—embittered, and for the most part filled with hatred of one another. He now passionately envied those who, enjoying fresh air and light and freedom, caracoled on fiery steeds around their chief, shooting and heartily singing: *Lya illyah il Allah!*

When he had crossed the *aoul,* Shamil rode into the large courtyard adjoining the inner court where his seraglio was. Two armed Lesghians met him at the open gates of this outer court, which was crowded with people. Some had come from distant parts about their own affairs; some had come with petitions; and some had been summoned by Shamil to be tried and sentenced. As Shamil rode in, all re-

spectfully saluted the Imám with their hands on their breasts. Some knelt down and remained on their knees while he rode across the court from the outer to the inner gates. Though he recognised among the people who waited in the court many whom he disliked, and many tedious petitioners who wanted his attention, Shamil passed them all with the same immovable stony expression on his face, and having entered the inner court, dismounted at the penthouse in front of his apartment, to the left of the gate. He was worn out, mentally rather than physically, with the strain of the campaign—for in spite of the public declaration that he had been victorious, he knew very well that his campaign had been unsuccessful; that many Chechen *aouls* had been burnt down and ruined, and that the unstable and fickle Chechens were wavering, and those nearest the border line were ready to go over to the Russians.

All this oppressed him, and had to be dealt with; but at that moment Shamil did not wish to think at all. He only desired one thing: rest, and the delights of family life, and the caresses of his favourite wife, the eighteen-year-old,

black-eyed, quick-footed Aminal, who at that very moment was close at hand behind the fence that divided the inner court and separated the men's from the women's quarters (Shamil felt sure she was there with his other wives, looking through a chink in the fence while he dismounted), but not only was it impossible for him to go to her, he could not even lie down on his feather cushions and rest from his fatigues, but had first of all to perform the mid-day rites, for which he had just then not the least inclination, but which—as the religious leader of the people—he could not omit, and which moreover, were as necessary to him himself as his daily food. So he performed his ablutions and said his prayers, and summoned those who were waiting for him.

The first to enter was Jemal Eddin, his father-in-law and teacher, a tall grey-haired good-looking old man, with a beard white as snow and a rosy red face. He said a prayer, and began questioning Shamil about the incidents of the campaign, and telling him what had happened in the mountains during his absence.

Among events of many kinds—murders con-

nected with blood-feuds, cattle-stealing, people accused of disobeying the Tarikát (smoking and drinking wine)—Jemal Eddin related how Hadji Murád had sent men to bring his family over to the Russians, but that this had been detected, and the family had been brought to Vedéno, where they were kept under guard and awaited the Imám's decision. In the next room, the guest-chamber, the Elders were assembled to discuss all these affairs, and Jemal Eddin advised Shamil to finish with them and let them go that same day, as they had already been waiting three days for him.

After eating his dinner—served to him in his room by Zeidát, a dark sharp-nosed disagreeable-looking woman, whom he did not love but who was his eldest wife—Shamil passed into the guest-chamber.

The six old men who made up his Council—white, grey, or red-bearded, with tall caps on their heads, some with turbans and some without, wearing new *beshméts* and Circassian coats girdled with straps to which hung their daggers—rose to greet him on his entrance. Shamil towered a head above them all. He, as

well as all the others, lifted his hands, palms upwards, closed his eyes and recited a prayer, and then stroked his face downwards with both hands, uniting them at the end of his beard. Having done this, they all sat down, Shamil on a larger cushion than the others, and discussed the various cases before them.

In the case of the criminals, the decisions were given according to the Shariát; two were sentenced to have a hand cut off for stealing; one man to be beheaded for murder; and three were pardoned. Then they came to the principal business—how to stop the Chechens from going over to the Russians. To counteract that tendency, Jemal Eddin drew up the following proclamation:—

"I wish you eternal peace with God the Almighty!

"I hear that the Russians flatter you and invite you to surrender to them. Do not believe them, and do not surrender, but endure. If ye be not rewarded for it in this life, ye shall receive your reward in the life to come. Remember what happened before, when they took your arms from you! If God had not brought

you to reason then, in 1840, ye would now be soldiers, and your wives would no longer wear trousers and would be dishonoured.

"Judge of the future by the past. It is better to die in enmity with the Russians than to live with the Unbelievers. Endure for a little while, and I will come with the Koran and the sword, and will lead you against the enemy. But now I strictly command you not only to entertain no intention, but not even a thought of submitting to the Russians!"

Shamil approved this proclamation, signed it, and had it sent out.

After this business they considered Hadji Murád's case. This was of the utmost importance to Shamil. Although he did not wish to admit it, he knew that if Hadji Murád, with his agility boldness, and courage had been with him, what had now happened in Chechnya would not have occurred. It would therefore be well to make it up with Hadji Murád, and again have the benefit of his services; but as this was not possible, it would never do to allow him to help the Russians; and therefore he must be enticed back and killed. They might

accomplish this either by sending a man to Tiflis who would kill him there, or by inducing him to come back, and then killing him. The only means of doing the latter was by making use of his family, and especially his son, whom, as Shamil knew, Hadji Murád loved passionately. Therefore they must act through the son.

When the councillors had talked all this over, Shamil closed his eyes and sat silent.

The councillors knew that this meant that he was listening to the voice of the Prophet, who spoke to him and told him what to do.

After five minutes of solemn silence Shamil opened his eyes, and narrowing them more than usual, said,—

"Bring Hadji Murád's son to me."

"He is here," replied Jemal Eddin; and in fact Yusúf, Hadji Murád's son, thin pale tattered and evil-smelling, but still handsome in face and figure, with black eyes that burnt like his grandmother Patimát's, was already standing by the gate of the outside court, waiting to be called in.

Yusúf did not share his father's feelings towards Shamil. He did not know all that had

happened in the past, or if he knew it, not having lived through it, he still did not understand why his father was so obstinately hostile to Shamil. To him, who wanted only one thing —to continue living the easy loose life that as the *Naïb's* son he had led in Khunzákh—it seemed quite unnecessary to be at enmity with Shamil. Out of defiance and a spirit of contradiction to his father, he particularly admired Shamil, and shared the ecstatic adoration with which he was regarded in the mountains. With a peculiar feeling of tremulous veneration for the Imám, he now entered the guest-chamber. As he stopped by the door he met the steady gaze of Shamil's half-closed eyes. He paused for a moment, and then approached Shamil and kissed his large, long-fingered hand.

"Thou art Hadji Murád's son?"

"I am, Imám."

"Thou knowest what he has done?"

"I know, Imám, and deplore it."

"Canst thou write?"

"I was preparing myself to be a Mullah—"

"Then write to thy father that if he will return to me now, before the Feast of Bairam,

I will forgive him, and everything shall be as it was before; but if not, and if he remains with the Russians—" and Shamil frowned sternly, "I will give thy grandmother, thy mother, and the rest, to the different *aouls,* and thee I will behead!"

Not a muscle of Yusúf's face stirred, and he bowed his head to show that he understood Shamil's words.

"Write that, and give it to my messenger."

Shamil ceased speaking, and looked at Yusúf for a long time in silence.

"Write that I have had pity on thee and will not kill thee, but will put out thine eyes as I do to all traitors! . . . Go!"

While in Shamil's presence Yusúf appeared calm; but when he had been led out of the guest-chamber he rushed at his attendant, snatched the man's dagger from its sheath, and wished to stab himself; but he was seized by the arms, bound, and led back to the pit.

That evening at dusk, after he had finished his evening prayers, Shamil put on a white fur-lined cloak, and passed out to the other side of the fence where his wives lived, and went

straight to Aminal's room; but he did not find her there. She was with the older wives. Then Shamil, trying to remain unseen, hid behind the door and stood waiting for her. But Aminal was angry with him because he had given some silk stuff to Zeidát, and not to her. She saw him come out and go into her room looking for her, and she purposely kept away. She stood a long time at the door of Zeidát's room, softly laughing at Shamil's white figure that kept coming in and out of her room.

Having waited for her in vain, Shamil returned to his own apartments when it was already time for the midnight prayers.

XX

Hadji Murád had been a week in the Major's house at the fort. Although Mary Dmítrievna quarrelled with the shaggy Khanéfi (Hadji Murád had only brought two of his *murids,* Khanéfi and Eldár, with him) and had turned him out of her kitchen—for which he nearly killed her—she evidently felt a particular respect and sympathy for Hadji Murád. She now no longer served him his dinner, having handed over that duty to Eldár, but she seized every opportunity of seeing him and rendering him service. She always took the liveliest interest in the negotiations about his family, knew how many wives and children he had, and their ages; and each time a spy came to see him, she inquired as best she could into the results of the negotiations.

Butler during that week had become quite friendly with Hadji Murád. Sometimes the latter came to Butler's room; sometimes Butler went to Hadji Murád's. Sometimes they con-

versed by the help of the interpreter; and sometimes got on as best they could with signs and especially with smiles.

Hadji Murád had evidently taken a fancy to Butler. This could be gathered from Eldár's relations with the latter. When Butler entered Hadji Murád's room, Eldár met him with a pleased smile, showing his glittering teeth, and hurried to put down a cushion for him to sit on, and to relieve him of his sword if he was wearing one.

Butler also got to know and became friendly with the shaggy Khanéfi, Hadji Murád's sworn brother. Khanéfi knew many mountain songs, and sang them well. To please Butler, Hadji Murád often made Khanéfi sing, choosing the songs which he considered best. Khanéfi had a high tenor voice, and sang with extraordinary clearness and expression. One of the songs Hadji Murád specially liked, impressed Butler by its solemnly mournful tone, and he asked the interpreter to translate it.

The subject of the song was the very blood-feud that had existed between Khanéfi and Hadji Murád. It ran as follows:—

"The earth will dry on my grave,
Mother, my Mother!
And thou wilt forget me,
And over me rank grasses wave,
Father, my Father!
Nor wilt thou regret me!
When tears cease thy dark eyes to lave,
Sister, dear Sister!
No more will grief fret thee!

"But thou my Brother the Elder, wilt never forget,
With vengeance denied me!
And thou, my Brother the Younger, wilt ever regret,
Till thou liest beside me!

"Hotly thou camest, O death-bearing ball that I spurned,
For thou wast my Slave!
And thou, black earth, that battle-steed trampled and churned,
Wilt cover my grave!

"Cold art Thou, O Death, yet I was thy Lord and thy Master!
My body sinks fast to earth; my Soul to Heaven flies faster."

Hadji Murád always listened to this song with closed eyes, and when it ended on a long gradually dying note he always remarked in Russian,—

"Good song! Wise song!"

After Hadji Murád's arrival and Butler's intimacy with him and his *murids,* the poetry of the energetic life of the mountains took a still stronger hold on Butler. He procured for himself a *beshmét,* a Circassian coat and leggings, and imagined himself a mountaineer living the life those people lived.

On the day of Hadji Murád's departure, the Major invited several officers to see him off. They were sitting, some at the table where Mary Dmítrievna was pouring out tea, some at another table on which stood vódka Chikhír and light refreshments, when Hadji Murád, dressed for the journey, came limping with soft rapid footsteps into the room.

They all rose and shook hands with him. The Major offered him a seat on the divan, but Hadji Murád thanked him and sat down on a chair by the window.

The silence that followed his entrance did

not at all abash him. He looked attentively at all the faces and fixed an indifferent gaze on the tea-table with the *samovar* and refreshments. Petróvsky, a lively officer who now met Hadji Murád for the first time, asked him through the interpreter whether he liked Tiflis.

"*Alya!*" he replied.

"He says, 'Yes,' " translated the interpreter.

"What did he like there?"

Hadji Murád said something in reply.

"He liked the theatre best of all."

"And how did he like the ball at the house of the Commander-in-chief?"

Hadji Murád frowned. "Every nation has its own customs! Our women do not dress in such a way," said he, glancing at Mary Dmítrievna.

"Well, didn't he like it?"

"We have a proverb," said Hadji Murád to the interpreter, " 'The dog gave meat to the ass, and the ass gave hay to the dog, and both went hungry,' " and he smiled. "It's own customs seem good to each nation."

The conversation went no further. Some of the officers took tea; some, other refreshments.

Hadji Murád accepted the tumbler of tea offered him, and put it down before him.

"Won't you have cream and a bun?" asked Mary Dmítrievna, offering them to him.

Hadji Murád bowed his head.

"Well, I suppose it is good-bye!" said Butler, touching his knee. "When shall we meet again!"

"Good-bye, good-bye!" said Hadji Murád with a smile, in Russian. "*Kunák bulug.*—Strong *kunák* to thee! Time—*ayda*—go!" and he jerked his head in the direction in which he had to go.

Eldár appeared in the doorway carrying some large white thing across his shoulder and a sword in his hand. Hadji Murád beckoned him to himself, and Eldár came with his big strides and handed him a white *búrka* and the sword. Hadji Murád rose, took the *búrka,* threw it over his arm, and, saying something to the interpreter, handed it to Mary Dmítrievna.

The interpreter said, "He says thou hast praised the *búrka,* so accept it."

"Oh, why?" said Mary Dmítrievna, blushing.

"It is necessary. Like Adam," said Hadji Murád.

"Well, thank you," said Mary Dmítrievna, taking the *búrka.* "God grant that you rescue your son," added she. "*Ulan yakshi,*" said she. "Tell him that I wish him success in releasing his son."

Hadji Murád glanced at Mary Dmítrievna, and nodded his head approvingly. Then he took the sword from Eldár and handed it to the Major. The Major took it, and said to the interpreter,—

"Tell him to take my chestnut gelding. I have nothing else to give him."

Hadji Murád waved his hand in front of his face to show that he did not want anything and would not accept it. Then, pointing first to the mountains and then to his heart, he went out.

Every one followed him as far as the door. The officers who remained inside the room drew the sword from its scabbard, examined its blade, and decided that it was a real Gurda.[1]

Butler accompanied Hadji Murád to the

[1] A highly-prized quality of blade.

porch, and then something very unexpected occurred which might have ended fatally for Hadji Murád, had it not been for his quick observation, determination, and agility.

The inhabitants of the Kumúkh *aoul,* Tash-Kichu, which was friendly to the Russians, greatly respected Hadji Murád, and had often come to the fort merely to look at the famous *Naïb.* They had sent messengers to him three days previously to ask him to visit their mosque on the Friday. But the Kumúkh princes who lived in Tash-Kichu hated Hadji Murád because there was a blood feud between them; and on hearing of this invitation they announced to the people that they would not allow him to enter the mosque. The people became excited, and a fight occurred between them and the princes' supporters. The Russian authorities pacified the mountaineers and sent word to Hadji Murád not to go to the mosque.

Hadji Murád did not go, and every one supposed that the matter was settled.

But at the very moment of his departure, when he came out into the porch before which the horses stood waiting, Arslán Khan—one

of the Kumúkh princes and an acquaintance of Butler's and of the Major's—rode up to the house.

When he saw Hadji Murád he snatched a pistol from his belt and aimed at him; but before he could fire, Hadji Murád—in spite of his lameness—rushed down from the porch like a cat towards Arslán Khan, who fired and missed.

Seizing Arslán Khan's horse by the bridle with one hand, Hadji Murád drew his dagger with the other and shouted something to him in Tartar.

Butler and Eldár both ran at once towards the enemies, and caught them by the arms. The Major, who had heard the shot, also came out.

"What do you mean by it, Arslán—starting such a horrid business on my premises?" said he, when he heard what had happened. "It's not right, friend! 'To the foe in the field, you need not yield!'—but to start this kind of slaughter in my place—!"

Arslán Khan, a little man with black moustaches, got off his horse, pale and trembling, looked angrily at Hadji Murád, and went into the house with the Major. Hadji Murád,

breathing heavily and smiling, returned to the horses.

"Why did he want to kill him?" Butler asked the interpreter.

"He says it is a law of theirs," the interpreter translated Hadji Murád's reply. "Arslán must avenge a relation's blood, and so he tried to kill him."

"And supposing he overtakes him on the road?" asked Butler.

Hadji Murád smiled.

"Well, if he kills me it will prove that such is Allah's will. . . . Good-bye," he said again in Russian, taking his horse by the withers. Glancing round at everybody who had come out to see him off, his eyes rested kindly on Mary Dmítrievna.

"Good-bye, my lass," said he to her. "I thank you."

"God help you—God help you to rescue your family!" repeated Mary Dmítrievna.

He did not understand her words, but felt her sympathy for him, and nodded to her.

"Mind, don't forget your *kunák,*" said Butler.

"Tell him I am his true friend and will never

forget him," answered Hadji Murád to the interpreter; and in spite of his short leg he swung himself lightly and quickly, barely touching the stirrup, into the high saddle, automatically feeling for his dagger and adjusting his sword. Then, with that peculiarly proud look with which only a Caucasian hillsman sits his horse—as though he were one with it—he rode away from the Major's house. Khanéfi and Eldár also mounted, and having taken a friendly leave of their hosts and of the officers, they rode off at a trot, following their *murshíd.*

As usual after any one's departure, those who remained behind began to discuss them.

"Plucky fellow! Didn't he rush at Arslán Khan like a wolf! His face quite changed!"

"But he'll be up to tricks—he's a terrible rogue, I should say," remarked Petróvsky.

"God grant there were more Russian rogues of such a kind!" suddenly put in Mary Dmítrievna with vexation. "He has lived a week with us, and we have seen nothing but good from him. He is courteous wise and just," she added.

"How did you find that out?"

"Well, I did find it out!"

"She's quite smitten," said the Major, who had just entered the room; "and that's a fact!"

"Well, and if I am smitten? What's that to you? But why run him down if he's a good man? Though he's a Tartar, he's still a good man!"

"Quite true, Mary Dmítrievna," said Butler; "and you're quite right to take his part!"

XXI

Life in our advanced forts in the Chechen lines went on as usual. Since the events last narrated there had been two alarms when the companies were called out, and militiamen galloped about; but both times the mountaineers who had caused the excitement got away; and once at Vozdvízhensk they killed a Cossack, and succeeded in carrying off eight Cossack horses that were being watered. There had been no further raids since the one in which the *aoul* was destroyed; but an expedition on a large scale was expected in consequence of the appointment of a new Commander of the Left Flank, Prince Baryátinsky. He was an old friend of the Viceroy's, and had been in command of the Kabardá Regiment. On his arrival at Grózny as commander of the whole Left Flank, he at once mustered a detachment to continue to carry out the Tsar's commands as communicated by Chernyshóv to Vorontsóv. The de-

tachment mustered at Vozdvízhensk left the fort, and took up a position towards Kurín. The troops were encamped there, and were felling the forest. Young Vorontsóv lived in a splendid cloth tent, and his wife, Mary Vasílevna, often came to the camp and stayed the night. Baryátinsky's relations with Mary Vasílevna were no secret to any one, and the officers who were not in the aristocratic set, and the soldiers, abused her in coarse terms—for her presence in camp caused them to be told off to lie in ambush at night. The mountaineers were in the habit of bringing guns within range and firing shells at the camp. The shells generally missed their aim, and therefore at ordinary times no special measures were taken to prevent such firing; but now, men were placed in ambush to hinder the mountaineers from injuring or frightening Mary Vasílevna with their cannons. To have to be always lying in ambush at night to save a lady from being frightened, offended and annoyed them; and therefore the soldiers, as well as the officers not admitted to the higher society, called Mary Vasílevna bad names.

Butler, having obtained leave of absence from his fort, came to the camp to visit some old messmates from the cadet corps and fellow-officers of the Kurín regiment, who were serving as adjutants and orderly-officers. When he first arrived he had a very good time. He put up in Poltorátsky's tent, and there met many acquaintances who gave him a hearty welcome. He also called on Vorontsóv whom he knew slightly, having once served in the same regiment with him. Vorontsóv received him very kindly, introduced him to Prince Baryátinsky, and invited him to the farewell dinner he was giving in honour of General Kozlóvsky, who, until Baryátinsky's arrival, had been in command of the Left Flank.

The dinner was magnificent. Special tents were erected in a line, and along the whole length of them a table was spread, as for a dinner-party, with dinner-services and bottles. Everything recalled life in the guards in Petersburg. Dinner was served at two o'clock. In the middle on one side sat Kozlóvsky; on the other, Baryátinsky. At Kozlóvsky's right and left hand sat the Vorontsóvs, husband and wife.

All along the table on both sides sat the officers of the Kabardá and Kurín regiments. Butler sat next to Poltorátsky, and they both chatted merrily and drank with the officers around them. When the roast was served and the orderlies had gone round and filled the champagne glasses, Poltorátsky, with real anxiety, said to Butler,—

"Our Kozlóvsky will disgrace himself!"

"Why?"

"Why, he'll have to make a speech, and what good is he at that? . . . Yes, it's not as easy as capturing entrenchments under fire! And with a lady beside him, too, and these aristocrats!"

"Really it's painful to look at him," said the officers to one another. And now the solemn moment had arrived. Baryátinsky rose and lifting his glass addressed a short speech to Kozlóvsky. When he had finished, Kozlóvsky —who always had a trick of using the word "how" superfluously—rose and stammeringly began,—

"In compliance with the august will of his Majesty, I am leaving you—parting from you,

gentlemen," said he. "But consider me as always remaining among you. The truth of the proverb, how 'One man in the field is no warrior,' is well known to you, gentlemen. . . . Therefore, how every reward I have received . . . how all the benefits showered on me by the great generosity of our sovereign the Emperor . . . how all my position—how my good name . . . how everything decidedly . . . how . . ." (here his voice trembled) ". . . how I am indebted to you for it, to you alone, my friends!" The wrinkled face puckered up still more, he gave a sob, and tears came into his eyes. "How from my heart I offer you my sincerest, heartfelt gratitude!"

Kozlóvsky could not go on, but turned round and began to embrace the officers. The Princess hid her face in her handkerchief. The Prince blinked, with his mouth drawn awry. Many of the officers' eyes grew moist, and Butler, who had hardly known Kozlóvsky, could also not restrain his tears. He liked all this very much.

Then followed other toasts. Baryátinsky's,

Vorontsóv's, the officers', and the soldiers' healths were drunk, and the visitors left the table intoxicated with wine and with the military elation to which they were always so prone. The weather was wonderful, sunny and calm, and the air fresh and bracing. On all sides bonfires crackled and songs resounded. It might have been thought that everybody was celebrating some joyful event. Butler went to Poltorátsky's in the happiest most emotional mood. Several officers had gathered there, and a card-table was set. An Adjutant started a bank with a hundred roubles. Two or three times Butler left the tent with his hand gripping the purse in his trousers-pocket; but at last he could resist the temptation no longer, and despite the promsie he had given to his brother and to himself not to play, he began to bet. Before an hour was past, very red, perspiring, and soiled with chalk, he sat with both elbows on the table and wrote on it—under cards bent for "corners" and "transports"—the figures of his stakes. He had already lost so much that he was afraid to count up what was scored against him. But he knew without

counting that all the pay he could draw in advance, added to the value of his horse, would not suffice to pay what the Adjutant, a stranger to him, had written down against him. He would still have gone on playing, but the Adjutant sternly laid down the cards he held in his large clean hands, and added up the chalked figures of the score of Butler's losses. Butler, confused, began to make excuses for being unable to pay the whole of his debt at once; and said he would send it from home. When he said this he noticed that everybody pitied him, and that they all—even Poltorátsky—avoided meeting his eye. That was his last evening there. He need only have refrained from playing, and gone to the Vorontsóvs who had invited him, and all would have been well, thought he; but now it was not only not well, but terrible.

Having taken leave of his comrades and acquaintances he rode home and went to bed, and slept for eighteen hours as people usually sleep after losing heavily. From the fact that he asked her to lend him fifty kopeks to tip the Cossack who had escorted him, and from his

sorrowful looks and short answers, Mary Dmítrievna guessed that he had lost at cards, and she reproached the Major for having given him leave of absence.

When he woke up at noon next day and remembered the situation he was in, he longed again to plunge into the oblivion from which he had just emerged; but it was impossible. Steps had to be taken to repay the four hundred and seventy roubles he owed to the stranger. The first step he took was to write to his brother, confessing his sin and imploring him, for the last time, to lend him five hundred roubles on the security of the mill that they still owned in common. Then he wrote to a stingy relative, asking her to lend him five hundred roubles at whatever rate of interest she liked. Finally he went to the Major, knowing that he—or rather Mary Dmítrievna—had some money, and asked him to lend him five hundred roubles.

"I'd let you have them at once," said the Major, "but Másha won't! These women are so close-fisted—who the devil can understand them? . . . And yet you must get out of it

somehow, devil take him! . . . Hasn't that brute the canteen-keeper something?"

But it was no use trying to borrow from the canteen-keeper; so that Butler's salvation could only come from his brother or from his stingy relative.

XXII

Not having attained his aim in Chechnya, Hadji Murád returned to Tiflis and went every day to Vorontsóv's; and whenever he could obtain audience he implored the Viceroy to gather together the mountaineer prisoners and to exchange them for his family. He said that unles that were done his hands were tied and he could not serve the Russians and destroy Shamil, as he desired to do. Vorontsóv vaguely promised to do what he could, but put it off, saying that he would decide when General Argutínsky reached Tiflis and he could talk the matter over with him.

Then Hadji Murád asked Vorontsóv to allow him to go to live for a while in Nukhá, a small town in Transcaucasia, where he thought he could better carry on negotiations about his family with Shamil and with the people who were attached to himself. Moreover, Nukhá being a Mohammedan town, had a mosque

where he could more conveniently perform the rites of prayer demanded by the Mohammedan law. Vorontsóv wrote to Petersburg about it, but meanwhile gave Hadji Murád permission to go to Nukhá.

For Vorontsóv and the authorities in Petersburg, as well as for most Russians acquainted with Hadji Murád's history, the whole episode presented itself as a lucky turn in the Caucasian war, or simply as an interesting event. For Hadji Murád, on the other hand, it was (especially latterly) a terrible crisis in his life. He had escaped from the mountains partly to save himself, partly out of hatred of Shamil; and difficult as this flight had been, he had attained his object and for a time was glad of his success, and really devised a plan to attack Shamil; but the rescue of his family—which he had thought would be easy to arrange—had proved more difficult than he expected.

Shamil had seized the family and kept them prisoners, threatening to hand the women over to the different *aouls,* and to blind or kill the son. Now Hadji Murád had gone to Nukhá intending to try, by the aid of his adherents

in Daghestan, to rescue his family from Shamil by force or by cunning. The last spy who had come to see him in Nukhá informed him that the Avars devoted to him were preparing to capture his family and to come over to the Russians with it; but that there were not enough of them, and they could not risk making the attempt in Vedenó where the family was at present imprisoned, but could only do it if the family were moved from Vedenó to some other place: in which case they promised to rescue them on the way.

Hadji Murád sent word to his friends that he would give three thousand roubles for the liberation of his family.

At Nukhá a small house of five rooms was assigned to Hadji Murád near the mosque and the Khan's palace. The officers in charge of him, his interpreter, and his henchmen stayed in the same house. Hadji Murád's life was spent in the expectation and reception of messengers from the mountains, and in rides he was allowed to take in the neighbourhood.

On 24th April, returning from one of these rides, Hadji Murád learnt that during his ab-

sence an official had arrived from Tiflis, sent by Vorontsóv. In spite of his longing to know what message the official had brought him, Hadji Murád, before going into the room where the officer in charge and the official were waiting, went to his bedroom and repeated his noonday prayer. When he had finished he came out into the room which served him as drawing and reception room. The official who had come from Tiflis, Councillor Kiríllov, informed Hadji Murád of Vorontsóv's wish that he should come to Tiflis on the 12th, to meet General Argutínsky.

"*Yakshí!*" said Hadji Murád angrily. The councillor did not please him. "Have you brought money?"

"I have," answered Kiríllov.

"For two weeks now," said Hadji Murád, holding up first both hands and then four fingers. "Give here!"

"We'll give it you at once," said the official, getting his purse out of his travelling-bag. "What does he want with the money?" he went on in Russian, thinking Hadji Murád would not understand. But Hadji Murád understood,

and glanced angrily at Kiríllov. While getting out the money the councillor, wishing to begin a conversation with Hadji Murád in order on his return to have something to tell Prince Vorontsóv, asked through the interpreter whether Hadji Murád was not feeling dull there. Hadji Murád glanced contemptuously out of the corner of his eye at the fat unarmed little man dressed as a civilian, and did not reply. The interpreter repeated the question.

"Tell him that I cannot talk with him! Let him give me the money!" and having said this, Hadji Murád sat down at the table ready to count the money.

When Kiríllov had got out the money and arranged it in seven piles of ten gold pieces each (Hadji Murád received five gold pieces daily) and pushed them towards Hadji Murád, the latter poured the gold into the sleeve of his Circassian coat, rose, and quite unexpectedly slapped Councillor Kiríllov on his bald pate, and turned to go.

The councillor jumped up and ordered the interpreter to tell Hadji Murád that he must not dare to behave like that to him, who held a

rank equal to that of colonel! The officer in charge confirmed this, but Hadji Murád only nodded to signify that he knew, and left the room.

"What is one to do with him?" said the officer in charge. "He'll stick his dagger into you, that's all! One cannot talk with those devils! I see that he is getting exasperated."

As soon as it began to grow dusk, two spys with hoods covering their faces up to their eyes, came to him from the hills. The officer in charge led them to Hadji Murád's room. One of them was a fleshy swarthy Tavlinian; the other, a thin old man. The news they brought was not cheering for Hadji Murád. His friends who had undertaken to rescue his family, now definitely refused to do so, being afraid of Shamil—who threatened to punish with the most terrible tortures any one who helped Hadji Murád. Having heard the messengers, Hadji Murád sat with his elbows on his crossed legs, and bowing his turbaned head, remained silent a long time.

He was thinking, and thinking resolutely. He knew that he was now considering the mat-

ter for the last time, and that it was necessary to come to a decision. At last he raised his head, gave each of the messengers a gold piece, and said: "Go!"

"What answer will there be?"

"The answer will be as God pleases. . . . Go!"

The messengers rose and went away, and Hadji Murád continued to sit on the carpet, leaning his elbows on his knees. He sat thus a long time, and pondered.

"What am I to do? To take Shamil at his word and return to him?" he thought. "He is a fox and will deceive me. Even if he did not deceive me, it would still be impossible to submit to that red liar. It is impossible . . . because now that I have been with the Russians he will not trust me," thought Hadji Murád; and he remembered a Tavlinian fable about a falcon who had been caught and lived among men, and afterwards returned to his own kind in the hills. He returned, but wearing jesses with bells; and the other falcons would not receive him. "Fly back to where they hung those silver bells on thee!" said they. "We

have no bells and no jesses." The falcon did not want to leave his home, and remained; but the other falcons did not wish to let him stay there, and pecked him to death.

"And they would peck me to death in the same way," thought Hadji Murád. "Shall I remain here and conquer Caucasia for the Russian Tsar, and earn renown, titles, riches?"

"That could be done," thought he, recalling his interviews with Vorontsóv, and the flattering things the Prince had said. "But I must decide at once, or Shamil will destroy my family."

That night Hadji Murád remained awake, thinking.

XXIII

By midnight his decision had been formed. He had decided that he must fly to the mountains, and with the Avars still devoted to him must break into Vedenó, and either die or rescue his family. Whether after rescuing them he would return to the Russians or escape to Khunzákh and fight Shamil, he had not made up his mind. All he knew was that first of all he must escape from the Russians into the mountains; and he at once began to carry out his plan.

He drew his black wadded *beshmét* from under his pillow, and went into his henchmen's room. They lived on the other side of the hall. As soon as he entered the hall, the outer door of which stood open, he was at once enveloped by the dewy freshness of the moonlit night and his ears were filled by the whistling and trilling of several nightingales in the garden by the house.

Having crossed the hall, Hadji Murád opened the door of his henchmen's room. There was no light in the room, but the moon in its first quarter shone in at the window. A table and two chairs were standing on one side of the room; and four of Hadji Murád's henchmen were lying on carpets or on *bűrkas* on the floor. Khanéfi slept outside with the horses. Gamzálo heard the door creak, rose, turned round, and saw Hadji Murád. On recognising him he lay down again. But Eldár, who lay beside him, jumped up and began putting on his *beshmét,* expecting his master's orders. Khan Mahomá and Bata slept on. Hadji Murád put down the *beshmét* he had brought on the table, and it hit the table with a dull sound. This was caused by the gold sewn up in it.

"Sew these in too," said Hadji Murád, handing Eldár the gold pieces he had that day received. Eldár took them, and at once went into the moonlight, drew a small knife from under his dagger, and started unstitching the lining of the *beshmét.* Gamzálo raised himself and sat up with his legs crossed.

"And you, Gamzálo, tell the fellows to ex-

amine the rifles and pistols and to get the ammunition ready. To-morrow we shall go far," said Hadji Murád.

"We have bullets and powder; everything shall be ready," replied Gamzálo, and roared out something incomprehensible. He understood why Hadji Murád had ordered the rifles to be loaded. From the first he had desired only one thing—to slay and stab as many Russians as possible, and to escape to the hills; and this desire had increased day by day. Now at last he saw that Hadji Murád also wanted this, and he was satisfied.

When Hadji Murád went away, Gamzálo roused his comrades, and all four spent the rest of the night examining their rifles pistols flints and accoutrements; replacing what was damaged, sprinkling fresh powder on to the pans, and stoppering packets filled with powder measured for each charge with bullets wrapped in oiled rags, sharpening their swords and daggers and greasing the blades with tallow.

Before daybreak Hadji Murád again came out into the hall to get some water for his ab-

lutions. The songs of the nightingales that had burst into ecstasy at dawn sounded even louder and more incessant than they had done before, while from his henchmen's room, where the daggers were being sharpened, came the regular squeaking and rasping of iron against stone.

Hadji Murád got himself some water from a tub, and was already at his own door when, above the sound of the grinding, he heard from his *murids'* room the high tones of Khanéfi's voice singing a familiar song. Hadji Murád stopped to listen. The song told of how a *dzhigit,* Hamzád, with his brave followers captured a herd of white horses from the Russians, and how a Russian prince followed him beyond the Térek and surrounded him with an army as large as a forest; and then the song went on to tell how Hamzád killed the horses, and, with his men entrenched behind this gory bulwark, fought the Russians as long as they had bullets in their rifles, daggers in their belts, and blood in their veins. But before he died Hamzád saw some birds flying in the sky and cried to them,—

"Fly on, ye winged ones, fly to our homes!
Tell ye our mothers, tell ye our sisters,
Tell the white maidens, fighting we died
For Ghazavát! Tell them our bodies
Never shall lie and rest in a tomb!
Wolves shall devour and tear them to pieces,
Ravens and vultures pluck out our eyes."

With that the song ended, and at the last words, sung to a mournful air, the merry Bata's vigorous voice joined in with a loud shout of *"Lya-il lyakha-il' Allakh!"* finishing with a shrill shriek. Then all was quiet again, except for the *tchut, tchuk, tchuk, tchuk* and whistling of the nightingales from the garden, and from behind the door the even grinding, and now and then the whizz, of iron sliding quickly along the whetstone.

Hadji Murád was so full of thought that he did not notice how he tilted his jug till the water began to pour out. He shook his head at himself, and re-entered his room. After performing his morning ablutions he examined his weapons and sat down on his bed. There was nothing more for him to do. To be al-

lowed to ride out, he would have to get permission from the officer in charge; but it was not yet daylight, and the officer was still asleep.

Khanéfi's song reminded him of another song, the one his mother had composed just after he was born: the song addressed to his father, that Hadji Murád had mentioned to Lóris-Mélikov.

"Thy sword of Damascus-steel tore my white bosom;
But close on it laid I my own little boy;
In my hot-streaming blood him I laved; and the wound
Without herbs or specifics was soon fully healed.
As I, facing death, remained fearless, so he,
My boy, my *dzhigit,* from all fear shall be free!"

He remembered how his mother put him to sleep beside her under a cloak, on the roof of their *sáklya,* and how he asked her to let him see the place on her side where the wound had left a scar. Hadji Murád seemed to see his mother before him—not wrinkled, grey-haired, with gaps between her teeth, as he had lately left her, but young handsome and so strong that she carried him in a basket on her back across

the mountains to her father's when he was a heavy five-year-old boy. He also recalled his grandfather, wrinkled and grey-bearded, and how the old man hammered silver with his sinewy hands, and made him say his prayers.

He thought of the fountain at the foot of the hill, whither, holding to her wide trousers, he went with his mother to fetch water. He remembered the lean dog that used to lick his face, and he recalled with special vividness the peculiar smell of sour milk and smoke in the shed where his mother took him with her when she went to milk the cows or scald the milk. He remembered how she shaved his head for the first time, and how surprised he was to see his round blue-gleaming head reflected in the brightly-polished brass basin that hung against the wall.

And the recollection of himself as a little child reminded him of his beloved son, Yusúf, whose head he himself had shaved for the first time; and now this Yusúf was a handsome young *dzhigit.* He pictured him as he was when last he saw him. It was on the day that Hadji Murád left Tselméss. His son brought

him his horse and asked to be allowed to accompany him. Yusúf was ready dressed and armed, and led his own horse by the bridle. His rosy handsome young face and the whole of his tall slender figure (he was taller than his father) breathed of daring, youth, and the joy of life. The breadth of his shoulders, though he was so young, the very wide youthful hips, the long slender waist, and the strength of his long arms, the power flexibility and agility of all his movements had always rejoiced Hadji Murád, who admired his son.

"Thou hadst better stay. Thou wilt be alone at home now. Take care of thy mother and thy grandmother," said Hadji Murád. And he remembered the spirited and proud look and the flush of pleasure with which Yusúf had replied that as long as he lived no one should injure his mother or grandmother. All the same Yusúf had mounted and accompanied his father as far as the stream. There he turned back, and since then Hadji Murád had not seen his wife, his mother, or his son. And it was this son whose eyes Shamil wished to put out! Of what would be done to his wife, Hadji Murád did not wish to think.

These thoughts so excited him that he could not sit still any longer. He jumped up and went limping quickly to the door, opened it, and called Eldár. The sun had not yet risen, but it was already quite light. The nightingales were still singing.

"Go, and tell the officer that I want to go out riding; and saddle the horses," said he.

XXIV

Butler's only consolation all this time was the poetry of warfare, to which he gave himself up not only during his hours of service, but also in private life. Dressed in his Circassian costume he rode and swaggered about, and twice went into ambush with Bogdanóvitch, though neither time did they discover or kill any one. This closeness to and friendship with Bogdanóvitch, famed for his courage, seemed pleasant and warlike to Butler. He had paid his debt, having borrowed the money of a Jew at an enormous rate of interest—that is to say, he had only postponed his difficulties without solving them. He tried not to think of his position, and to find oblivion not only in the poetry of warfare, but also in wine. He drank more and more every day, and day by day grew morally weaker. He was now no longer the chaste Joseph he had been towards Mary Dmítrievna, but on the contrary began courting her grossly,

but to his surprise, met with a strong and decided repulse which put him to shame.

At the end of April there arrived at the fort a detachment with which Baryátinsky intended to effect an advance right through Chechnya, which had till then been considered impassable. In that detachment were two companies of the Kabardá regiment, and according to the Caucasian custom these were treated as guests by the Kurín companies. The soldiers were lodged in the barracks, and were treated not only to supper, consisting of buckwheat-porridge and beef, but also to vódka. The officers shared the quarters of the Kurín officers, and as usual those in residence gave the newcomers a dinner, at which the regimental singers performed, and which ended up with a drinking-bout. Major Petróv, very drunk and no longer red but ashy pale, sat astride a chair, and drawing his sword, hacked at imaginary foes, alternately swearing and laughing, now embracing some one and now dancing to the tune of his favourite song.

"Shamil, he began to riot
In the days gone by;
Try, ry, rataty,
In the years gone by!"

Butler was there, too. He tried to see the poetry of warfare in this also; but in the depth of his soul he was sorry for the Major. To stop him however was quite impossible; and Butler, feeling that the fumes were mounting to his own head, quietly left the room and went home.

The moon lit up the white houses and the stones on the road. It was so light that every pebble, every straw, every little heap of dust was visible. As he approached the house, Butler met Mary Dmítrievna with a shawl over her head and neck. After the rebuff she had given him, Butler had avoided her, feeling rather ashamed; but now, in the moonlight and after the wine he had drunk, he was pleased to meet her, and wished again to make up to her.

"Where are you off to?" he asked.

"Why, to see after my old man," she answered pleasantly. Her rejection of Butler's

advances was quite sincere and decided, but she did not like his avoiding her as he had done lately.

"Why bother about him? He'll soon come back."

"But will he?"

"If he doesn't, they'll bring him."

"Just so. . . . That's not right, you know! . . . But you think I'd better not go?"

"No, don't. We'd better go home."

Mary Dmítrievna turned back and walked beside him. The moon shone so brightly that round the shadows of their heads a halo seemed to move along the road. Butler was looking at this halo and making up his mind to tell her that he liked her as much as ever, but he did not know how to begin. She waited to hear what he would say. So they walked on in silence almost to the house, when some horsemen appeared from round the corner. They were an officer with an escort.

"Who's that coming now?" said Mary Dmítrievna, stepping aside. The moon was behind the rider, so that she did not recognise him until he had almost come up to Butler and her-

self. It was Peter Nikoláevich Kámenev, an officer who had formerly served with the Major, and whom Mary Dmítrievna therefore knew.

"Is that you, Peter Nikoláevich?" said she, addressing him.

"It's me," said Kámenev. "Ah, Butler, how d'you do? . . . Not asleep yet? Having a walk with Mary Dmítrievna! You'd better look out, or the Major will give it you. . . . Where is he?"

"Why, there. . . . Listen!" replied Mary Dmítrievna, pointing in the direction whence came the sounds of a *tulumbas* [1] and of songs. "They're on the spree."

"How's that? Are your people having a spree on their own?"

"No; some officers have come from Hasav-Yurt, and they are being entertained."

"Ah, that's good! I shall be in time. . . . I just want the Major for a moment."

"On business?" asked Butler.

"Yes, just a little business matter."

"Good or bad?"

[1] *Tulumbas*, a sort of kettledrum.

"It all depends. . . . Good for us, but bad for some people," and Kámenev laughed.

By this time they had reached the Major's house.

"Chikhirév," shouted Kámenev to one of his Cossacks, "come here!"

A Don Cossack rode up from among the others. He was dressed in the ordinary Don Cossack uniform, with high boots and a mantle, and carried saddle-bags behind.

"Well, take the thing out," said Kámenev, dismounting.

The Cossack also dismounted, and took a sack out of his saddle-bag. Kámenev took the sack from him, and put his hand in.

"Well, shall I show you a novelty? You won't be frightened, Mary Dmítrievna?"

"Why should I be frightened?" she replied.

"Here it is!" said Kámenev, taking out a man's head, and holding it up in the light of the moon. "Do you recognise it?"

It was a shaven head with salient brows, black short-cut beard and moustaches, one eye open and the other half-closed. The shaven skull was cleft, but not right through, and there

was congealed blood in the nose. The neck was wrapped in a blood-stained towel. Notwithstanding the many wounds on the head, the blue lips still bore a kindly childlike expression.

Mary Dmítrievna looked at it, and without a word turned away and went quickly into the house.

Butler could not tear his eyes from the terrible head. It was the head of that very Hadji Murád with whom he had so recently spent his evenings in such friendly intercourse.

"How's that? Who has killed him?" he asked.

"Wanted to give us the slip, but was caught," said Kámenev, and he gave the head back to the Cossack, and went into the house with Butler.

"He died like a hero," said Kámenev.

"But however did it all happen?"

"Just wait a bit. When the Major comes I will tell you all about it. That's what I am sent for. I take it round to all the forts and *aouls* and show it."

The Major was sent for, and he came back

accompanied by two other officers as drunk as himself, and began embracing Kámenev.

"And I have brought you Hadji Murád's head," said Kámenev.

"No? . . . Killed?"

"Yes; wanted to escape."

"I always said he would bamboozle them! . . . And where is it? The head, I mean. . . . Let's see it."

The Cossack was called, and brought in the bag with the head. It was taken out, and the Major looked at it long with drunken eyes.

"All the same, he was a fine fellow," said he. "Let me kiss him!"

"Yes, it's true. It was a valiant head," said one of the officers.

When all had looked at it, it was returned to the Cossack, who put it in his bag, trying to let it bump against the floor as gently as possible.

"I say, Kámenev, what speech do you make when you show the head?" asked an officer.

"No! . . . Let me kiss him. He gave me a sword!" shouted the Major.

Butler went out into the porch.

Mary Dmítrievna was sitting on the second

step. She looked round at Butler, and at once turned angrily away again.

"What's the matter, Mary Dmítrievna?" asked he.

"You're all cutthroats! . . . I hate it! You're cutthroats, really," and she got up.

"It might happen to any one," remarked Butler, not knowing what to say. "That's war."

"War? War, indeed! . . . Cutthroats and nothing else. A dead body should be given back to the earth, and they're grinning at it there! . . . Cutthroats, really," she repeated, as she descended the steps and entered the house by the back door.

Butler returned to the room, and asked Kámenev to tell them in detail how the thing had occurred.

And Kámenev told them.

This is what had happened.

XXV

Hadji Murád was allowed to go out riding in the neighbourhood of the town, but never without a convoy of Cossacks. There was only half a troop of them altogether in Nukhá, ten of whom were employed by the officers, so that if ten were sent out with Hadji Murád (according to the orders received) the same men would have had to go every other day. Therefore, after ten had been sent out the first day, it was decided to send only five in future, and Hadji Murád was asked not to take all his henchmen with him. But on 25th April he rode out with all five. When he mounted, the commander, noticing that all five henchmen were going with him, told him that he was forbidden to take them all; but Hadji Murád pretended not to hear, touched his horse, and the commander did not insist.

With the Cossacks rode a non-commissioned officer, Nazárov, who had received the Cross of

St. George for bravery. He was a young healthy brown-haired lad, as fresh as a rose. He was the eldest of a poor family belonging to the sect of Old Believers, had grown up without a father, and had maintained his old mother, three sisters, and two brothers.

"Mind, Nazárov, keep close to him!" shouted the commander.

"All right, your honour!" answered Nazárov, and rising in his stirrups and adjusting the rifle that hung at his back, he started his fine large roan gelding at a trot. Four Cossacks followed him: Therapóntov, tall and thin, a regular thief and plunderer (he it was who had sold gunpowder to Gamzálo); Ignátov, a sturdy peasant who boasted of his strength, was no longer young, and had nearly completed his service; Míshkin, a weakly lad at whom everybody laughed; and the young fair-haired Petrakóv, his mother's only son, always amiable and jolly.

The morning had been misty, but it cleared up later on, and the opening foliage, the young virgin grass, the sprouting corn and the ripples of the rapid river just visible to the left of the road, all glittered in the sunshine.

Hadji Murád rode slowly along, followed by the Cossacks and by his henchmen. They rode out along the road beyond the fort at a walk. They met women carrying baskets on their heads, soldiers driving carts, and creaking wagons drawn by buffaloes. When he had gone about a mile and a half, Hadji Murád touched up his white Kabardá horse, which started at an amble that obliged the henchmen and Cossacks to ride at a quick trot to keep up with him.

"Ah, he's got a fine horse under him," said Therapóntov. "If only he were still an enemy I'd soon bring him down."

"Yes, mate. Three hundred roubles were offered for that horse in Tiflis."

"But I can get ahead of him on mine," said Nazárov.

"You get ahead? A likely thing!"

Hadji Murád kept increasing his pace.

"Hey, *kunák,* you mustn't do that. Steady!" cried Nazárov, starting to overtake Hadji Murád.

Hadji Murád looked round, said nothing, and continued to ride at the same pace.

"Mind, they're up to something, the devils!"

said Ignátov. "See how they are tearing along."

So they rode for the best part of a mile in the direction of the mountains.

"I tell you it won't do!" shouted Nazárov.

Hadji Murád did not answer, and did not look round, but only increased his pace to a gallop.

"Humbug! You'll not get away!" shouted Nazárov, stung to the quick. He gave his big roan gelding a cut with his whip, and rising in his stirrups and bending forward, flew full speed in pursuit of Hadji Murád.

The sky was so bright, the air so clear, and life played so joyously in Nazárov's soul as, becoming one with his fine strong horse, he flew along the smooth road behind Hadji Murád, that the possibility of anything sad or dreadful happening never occurred to him. He rejoiced that with every step he was gaining on Hadji Murád.

Hadji Murád judged by the approaching tramp of the big horse behind him that he would soon be overtaken, and seizing his pistol with his right hand, with his left he began slightly to rein in his Kabardá horse, which was ex-

cited by hearing the tramp of hoofs behind it.

"You mustn't, I tell you!" shouted Nazárov, almost level with Hadji Murád, and stretching out his hand to seize the latter's bridle. But before he reached it a shot was fired.—"What are you doing?" screamed Nazárov, catching hold of his breast. "At them, lads!" he exclaimed, and he reeled and fell forward on his saddle-bow.

But the mountaineers were beforehand in taking to their weapons, and fired their pistols at the Cossacks and hewed at them with their swords.

Nazárov hung on the neck of his horse, which careered round his comrades. The horse under Ignátov fell, crushing his leg, and two of the mountaineers, without dismounting, drew their swords and hacked at his head and arms. Petrakóv was about to rush to his comrades' rescue, when two shots—one in the back and the other in his side—stung him, and he fell from his horse like a sack.

Míshkin turned round and galloped off towards the fortress. Khanéfi and Bata rushed after him, but he was already too far

away and they could not catch him. When they saw that they could not overtake him, they returned to the others.

Petrakóv lay on his back, his stomach ripped open, his young face turned to the sky, and while dying he gasped for breath like a fish.

Gamzálo having finished off Ignátov with his sword, gave a cut to Nazárov too, and threw him from his horse. Bata took their cartridge-pouches from the slain. Khánefi wished to take Nazárov's horse, but Hadji Murád called out to him to leave it, and dashed forward along the road. His *murids* galloped after him, driving away Nazárov's horse that tried to follow them. They were already among rice fields more than six miles from Nukhá when a shot was fired from the tower of that place to give the alarm.

. . . . .

"Oh, good Lord! Oh, dear me! Dear me! What have they done?" cried the commander of the fort, seizing his head with his hands, when he heard of Hadji Murád's escape. "They've done for me! They've let him escape, the villains!" cried he, listening to Míshkin's account.

An alarm was raised everywhere, and not

only the Cossacks of the place were sent after the fugitives, but also all the militia that could be mustered from the pro-Russian *aouls*. A thousand roubles reward was offered for the capture of Hadji Murád alive or dead, and two hours after he and his followers had escaped from the Cossacks more than two hundred mounted men were galloping after the officer in charge to find and capture the runaways.

After riding some miles along the highroad, Hadji Murád checked his panting horse, which, wet with perspiration, had turned from white to grey.

To the right of the road could be seen the *sáklyas* and minarets of the *aoul* Benerdzhík, on the left lay some fields, and beyond them the river. Although the way to the mountains lay to the right, Hadji Murád turned in the opposite direction, to the left, assuming that his pursuers would be sure to go to the right; while he, abandoning the road, would cross the Alazán and would come out on to the highroad on the other side, where no one would expect him, and would ride along it to the forest, and then,

after recrossing the river, would make his way to the mountains.

Having come to this conclusion, he turned to the left. But it proved impossible to reach the river. The rice-field which had to be crossed had just been flooded, as is always done in spring, and had become a bog in which the horses' legs sank above their pasterns. Hadji Murád and his henchmen turned, now to the left, now to the right, hoping to find drier ground; but the field they happened to be in had been equally flooded all over, and was now saturated with water. The horses drew their feet out of the sticky mud into which they sank, with a pop like that of a cork drawn from a bottle, and stopped, panting, after every few steps. They struggled in this way so long that it began to grow dusk, and they had still not reached the river. To their left lay a patch of higher ground overgrown with shrubs, and Hadji Murád decided to ride in among these clumps and remain there till night to rest their worn-out horses and let them graze. The men themselves ate some bread and cheese that they had brought with them. At last night came on

and the moon that had been shining at first, hid behind the hill, and it became dark. There were a great many nightingales in that neighbourhood, and there were two of them in these shrubs. As long as Hadji Murád and his men were making a noise among the bushes the nightingales had been silent, but when the people became still, the birds again began to call to one another and to sing.

Hadji Murád, awake to all the sounds of night, listened to them involuntarily, and their trills reminded him of the song about Hamzád which he had heard the night before when he went to get water. He might now at any moment find himself in the position in which Hamzád had been. He fancied that it would be so, and suddenly his soul became serious. He spread out his *búrka* and performed his ablutions, and scarcely had he finished before a sound was heard approaching their shelter. It was the sound of many horses' feet plashing through the bog.

The keen-sighted Bata ran out to one edge of the clump, and peering through the darkness saw black shadows, which were men on foot and

on horseback. Khanéfi discerned a similar crowd on the other side. It was Kargánov, the military commander of the district, with his militia.

"Well, then, we shall fight like Hamzád," thought Hadji Murád.

When the alarm was given, Kargánov, with a troop of militiamen and Cossacks, had rushed off in pursuit of Hadji Murád; but he had been unable to find any trace of him. He had already lost hope, and was returning home, when towards evening he met an old man and asked him if he had seen any horsemen about. The old man replied that he had. He had seen six horsemen floundering in the rice-field, and then had seen them enter the clump where he himself was getting wood. Kargánov turned back, taking the old man with him; and seeing the hobbled horses, he made sure that Hadji Murád was there. In the night he surrounded the clump, and waited till morning to take Hadji Murád alive or dead.

Having understood that he was surrounded, and having discovered an old ditch among the shrubs, Hadji Murád decided to entrench him-

self in it, and to resist as long as strength and ammunition lasted. He told this to his comrades, and ordered them to throw up a bank in front of the ditch; and his henchmen at once set to work to cut down branches, dig up the earth with their daggers, and to make an entrenchment. Hadji Murád himself worked with them.

As soon as it began to grow light the commander of the militia troop rode up to the clump and shouted,—

"Hey! Hadji Murád, surrender! We are many, and you are few!"

In reply came the report of a rifle, a cloudlet of smoke rose from the ditch, and a bullet hit the militiaman's horse, which staggered under him and began to fall. The rifles of the militiamen, who stood at the outskirt of the clump of shrubs, began cracking in their turn, and their bullets whistled and hummed, cutting off leaves and twigs and striking the embankment, but not the men entrenched behind it. Only Gamzálo's horse, that had strayed from the others, was hit in the head by a bullet. It did not fall, but breaking its hobbles and rushing among the bushes it ran to the other horses, pressing close

to them, and watering the young grass with its blood. Hadji Murád and his men fired only when any of the militiamen came forward, and rarely missed their aim. Three militiamen were wounded, and the others, far from making up their minds to rush the entrenchment, retreated further and further back, only firing from a distance and at random.

So it continued for more than an hour. The sun had risen to about half the height of the trees, and Hadji Murád was already thinking of leaping on his horse and trying to make his way to the river, when the shouts were heard of many men who had just arrived. These were Hadji Aga of Mekhtulí with his followers. There were about two hundred of them. Hadji Aga had once been Hadji Murád's *kunák,* and had lived with him in the mountains, but he had afterwards gone over to the Russians. With him was Akhmet Khan, the son of Hadji Murád's old enemy.

Like Kargánov, Hadji Aga began by calling to Hadji Murád to surrender, and Hadji Murád answered as before with a shot.

"Swords out, lads!" cried Hadji Aga, draw-

ing his own; and a hundred voices were raised of men who rushed shrieking in among the shrubs.

The militiamen ran in among the shrubs, but from behind the entrenchment came the crack of one shot after another. Some three men fell, and the attackers stopped at the outskirts of the clump and also began firing. As they fired they gradually approached the entrenchment, running across from behind one shrub to another. Some succeeded in getting across; others fell under the bullets of Hadji Murád or of his men. Hadji Murád fired without missing; Gamzálo too, rarely wasted a shot, and shrieked with joy every time he saw that his bullet had hit its aim. Khan Mahomá sat at the edge of the ditch singing "*Il lyakha il Allah!*" and fired leisurely, but often missed. Eldár's whole body trembled with impatience to rush dagger in hand at the enemy, and he fired often and at random, constantly looking round at Hadji Murád and stretching out beyond the entrenchment. The shaggy Khanéfi, with his sleeves rolled up, did the duty of a servant even here. He loaded the guns which Hadji Murád and

Kahn Mahomá passed to him, carefully driving home with a ramrod the bullets wrapped in greasy rags, and pouring dry powder out of the powder-flask on to the pans. Bata did not remain in the ditch as the others did, but kept running to the horses, driving them away to a safer place, and, shrieking incessantly, fired without using a prop for his gun. He was the first to be wounded. A bullet entered his neck, and he sat down spitting blood and swearing. Then Hadji Murád was wounded, the bullet piercing his shoulder. He tore some cotton wool from the lining of his *beshmét,* plugged the wound with it, and went on firing.

"Let us flay at them with our swords!" said Eldár for the third time, and he looked out from behind the bank of earth, ready to rush at the enemy; but at that instant a bullet struck him, and he reeled and fell backwards on to Hadji Murád's leg. Hadji Murád glanced at him. His beautiful ram's eyes gazed intently and seriously at Hadji Murád. His mouth, the upper lip pouting like a child's, twitched without opening. Hadji Murád drew his leg away from under him and continued firing.

Khanéfi bent over the dead Eldár and began taking the unused ammunition out of the cartridge-cases of his coat.

Khan Mahomá meanwhile continued to sing, loading leisurely and firing. The enemy ran from shrub to shrub, hallooing and shrieking, and drawing ever nearer and nearer.

Another bullet hit Hadji Murád in the left side. He lay down in the ditch, and again pulled some cotton wool out of his *beshmét* and plugged the wound. This wound in the side was fatal, and he felt that he was dying. Memories and pictures succeeded one another with extraordinary rapidity in his imagination. Now he saw the powerful Abu Nutsal Khan as, dagger in hand and holding up his severed cheek, he rushed at his foe; then he saw the weak, bloodless old Vorontsóv, with his cunning white face, and heard his soft voice; and then he saw his own son Yusúf, his wife Sofiát, and then the pale, red-bearded face of his enemy Shamil with half-closed eyes. All these images passed through his mind without evoking any feeling within him: neither pity nor anger nor any kind of desire; everything

seemed so insignificant in comparison with what was beginning, or had already begun, within him.

Yet his strong body continued the thing that he had commenced. Gathering together his last strength, he rose from behind the bank, fired his pistol at a man who was just running towards him, and hit him. The man fell. Then Hadji Murád got quite out of the ditch, and, limping heavily, went dagger in hand straight at the foe.

Some shots cracked, and he reeled and fell. Several militiamen with triumphant shrieks rushed towards the fallen body. But the body that seemed to be dead, suddenly moved. First the uncovered bleeding shaven head rose; then, with hands holding to the trunk of the tree, the body rose. He seemed so terrible that those who were running towards him stopped short. But suddenly a shudder passed through him; he staggered away from the tree and fell on his face, stretched out at full length, like a thistle that had been mown down, and he moved no more.

He did not move, but still he felt.

When Hadji Aga, who was the first to reach him, struck him on the head with a large dagger, it seemed to Hadji Murád that some one was striking him with a hammer, and he could not understand who was doing it, or why. That was his last consciousness of any connection with his body. He felt nothing more, and his enemies kicked and hacked at what had no longer anything in common with him.

Hadji Aga placed his foot on the back of the corpse, and with two blows cut off the head, and carefully—not to soil his shoes with blood—rolled it away with his foot. Crimson blood spurted from the arteries of the neck, and black blood flowed from the head, soaking the grass.

Kargánov and Hadji Aga and Akhmet Khan and all the militiamen gathered together—like sportsmen round a slaughtered animal—near the bodies of Hadji Murád and his men (Khanéfi, Khan Mahomá, and Gamzálo were bound), and amid the powder-smoke which hung over the bushes, they triumphed in their victory.

The nightingales, that had hushed their songs while the firing lasted, now started their trills

once more: first one quite close, then others in the distance.

. . . . .

It was of this death that I was reminded by the crushed thistle in the midst of the ploughed field.

PREFACE

TOLSTOY AS DRAMATIST

In almost every kind of literary work he touched, Tolstoy succeeded at once in reaching the foremost rank.

When he sent his first story, *Childhood,* anonymously to the poet Nekrásov, editor of *The Contemporary* (then the leading Petersburg magazine), the latter promptly accepted and published it; Dostoyévsky was so struck by it that he wrote from Siberia to inquire who its talented author was; Turgénev sang its praises, and Panáev was so delighted with it that his friends, it was said, had to avoid him on the Névsky lest he should insist on reading them extracts from it.

When Tolstoy turned from stories to novels he achieved the same immediate and complete success. The appearance of the first instalment of *War and Peace* sufficed to place him abreast of the world's greatest writers of fiction.

Fourteen years later he turned to spiritual auto-

biography, and his *Confession* immediately took rank beside those of St. Augustine and Rousseau.

When he propounded his interpretation of Christ's teaching, his works produced a profound impression and, though they were prohibited in Russia, found a large circulation abroad besides a surreptitious one at home.

Next he took to writing short, simple stories for the people, and the very first of these, *What Men Live By* (v. *Twenty-three Tales*), circulated by hundreds of thousands of copies in Russia, was translated into all civilised languages, and delighted people, old and young, in the five continents.

When he turned his attention to social problems, and wrote *What Then Must We Do?* the book aroused the deepest interest wherever it was read, and was promptly recognised as one of the most remarkable studies of poverty ever penned.

He took to essays, and at once produced a series which many readers have declared to be as interesting and stimulating as any that were ever written.

Interested in the philosophy of art, he wrote *What is Art?* His preparation for this attempt

to put art on a new basis took him, it is true, fifteen years, and a majority of critics everywhere denounced the opinions he expressed; but, at any rate, there was no doubt about the general interest he aroused, and the longer the matter is discussed, the stronger grows the suspicion that on the main point of the discussion Tolstoy saw deeper than his critics, and that, great artist as he was, his philosophy of art as well as his practice of it was fundamentally sound.

Finally his philippics, such as his *Reply to the Synod,* which had excommunicated him (v. *Essays and Letters*), and his denunciation of the Courts-martial in *I Cannot be Silent!* rang out with a sincerity, courage, and effectiveness unparalleled since Pascal's *Provincial Letters,* or the famous theses Luther nailed to the church door at Wittenberg.

Only as a dramatist did Tolstoy fail at his first attempt; and even in that direction success came so promptly that it is his success rather than his failure that surprises one.

As a seventeen-year-old student at Kazán University, he had taken part with much success in two plays given for some charity at Carnival time; and his taste for theatricals did not soon pass,

for in later years, when writing of the time after his return from the defence of Sevastopol, and telling of the death of his brother Demetrius, he adds: "I really believe that what hurt me most was that his death prevented my taking part in some private theatricals then being got up at Court and to which I had been invited."

While living in Petersburg and Moscow as a young man, Tolstoy was enthusiastic in his admiration of one of the great Russian actors of those days; but he never lived much in cities, and probably no other great dramatist ever spent so little time in the theatre as he did. In that, as in many other lines of work, his quickness of perception, tenacity of memory and vividness of emotion enabled him to dispense with the long training men of less genius require.

In 1863, soon after his marriage, he wrote two plays which were never published. One, a farcical comedy called *The Nihilist,* was privately performed with much success. The other, also a comedy, called *The Infected Family,* he intended for public performance. With that end in view, Tolstoy took it to Moscow early in 1864. The theatrical season (which in Russia ends at the be-

ginning of Lent) was then, however, too far advanced for any manager to stage the piece that winter; and, as it dealt with a topic of the day which lost some of its freshness by keeping, Tolstoy never afterwards offered it to any one.

That was the one and only rebuff he ever had to face in his literary career, if one excepts the amusing incident of his sending a short prose poem anonymously to a Moscow newspaper, and receiving it back declined with thanks, on the ground that its author was "not yet sufficiently expert in expression!" For the next six years he seems not to have taken any interest in the drama; but in 1870 we find him writing to Fet: —

"There is much, very much, I want to tell you about. I have been reading a lot of Shakespear, Goethe, Púshkin, Gógol and Molière, and about all of them there is much I want to say to you."

A few days later he again wrote to the same friend: —

"You want to read me a story of cavalry life . . . And I don't want to read you anything, because I am not writing anything; but I very much want to talk about Shakespear and Goethe, and the drama in general. This whole

winter I am occupied only with the drama; and it happens to me, as usually happens to people who, till they are forty, have not thought of a certain subject, or formed any conception of it; and then suddenly, with forty-year-old clearness, turn their attention to this new, untasted subject — it seems to them that they discern in it much that is new. All winter I have enjoyed myself lying down, drowsing, playing bézique, snow-shoeing, skating, and most of all lying in bed (ill) while characters from a drama or comedy have performed for me. And they perform very well. It is about that I want to talk to you. In that, as in everything, you are a classic and understand the essence of the matter very deeply. I should like also to read Sophocles and Euripides."

The mood passed, and for another fifteen years one hears no more about it: Tolstoy being absorbed first in the production of an *ABC Book* for school-children, then with *Anna Karénina,* then with his *Confession* and religious studies, as well as with field-work, hut-building, and boot-making.

Early in 1886, noting the wretched character of the plays given in the booths at the Carnival

Shows on the Maidens' Field just outside Moscow, not far from his own house, and feeling how wrong it was that the dramatic food of the people should consist of the crudest melodramas, he was moved to turn into a play a small Temperance story he had written. This piece, called *The First Distiller,* is of no great importance in itself, but was the precursor of the splendid dramas he soon afterwards produced.

The following summer, while out ploughing, he hurts his leg, neglects it, and gets erysipelas, which almost leads to blood-poisoning. His life is in imminent danger, he has to undergo a painful operation, is laid up for weeks, and while ill writes most of *The Power of Darkness,* an immensely powerful play which serves as a touchstone for those who have the Tolstoy feeling in them.

From the poisoning of Peter, the husband, in the beginning, to the murder of the baby in the middle, and Nikíta's arrest at the end, the piece is full of horrors which most people, who do not look at things from Tolstoy's point of view, find it wellnigh impossible to endure. To them the play appears to be one of unmitigated blackness. To Tolstoyans it is not so. The lies, the crimes,

the horrors are there, as in real life; but in the play one sees more clearly than in common life the clue to the meaning of it all. When Nikíta's conscience begins to be touched; when Mítritch, the old soldier, teaches him not to be afraid of men; and finally when Akím, the old father, rejoices that his son has confessed, the heavens open and the purpose of life — the preparing for what is yet to come by getting things straight here and now — is revealed; and the effect of the play, instead of being sordid or painful, becomes inspiring.

The play was founded on fact, though what happened in real life was even more gruesome, for in actual fact Nikíta's prototype, when on the point of driving off to Akulína's wedding, suddenly seized a large wooden wedge and aimed a tremendous blow at her younger sister; and he did this not out of malice, but because he felt so sure that it is a misfortune to be alive in a world where things have gone so wrong as they have done in the world we live in. Fortunately his blow, which seemed certain to kill the girl, glanced aside, and merely stunned her without doing her any permanent injury.

The Power of Darkness was prohibited by the Dramatic Censor, and throughout the reign of Alexander III. its public performance in Russia was forbidden.

It was produced for the first time at the Théâtre Libre in Paris, in February 1888. Among its most enthusiastic admirers was Zola, who was as anxious about it as he could have been had it been his own work. "Above all, do not strike out a single scene or a single word, and do not fear for its success," said he at one of the rehearsals; and he was quite right. The piece had a tremendous success, and was played at one and the same time at three different Paris theatres, as well as at the Freie Bühnen in Berlin, where it had a similar triumph. After the accession of Nicholas II. it was acted in Russia, and took rank at once as one of the greatest masterpieces of Russian dramatic art, and as such holds a place in the repertory of the best Moscow and Petersburg theatres.

Many Englishmen who have seen it have been immensely impressed by it. Laurence Irving wrote me: "I suppose England is the only country in Europe where *The Power of Darkness* has not

been acted. It ought to be done. It is a stupendous tragedy; the effect on the stage is unparalleled." Bernard Shaw, writing to Tolstoy, said, "I remember nothing in the whole range of drama that fascinated me more than the old soldier in your *Power of Darkness*. One of the things that struck me in that play was the feeling that the preaching of the old man, right as he was, could never be of any use — that it could only anger his son and rub the last grains of self-respect out of him. But what the pious and good father could not do, the old rascal of a soldier did as if he was the voice of God. To me that scene, where the two drunkards are wallowing in the straw and the older rascal lifts the younger one above his cowardice and his selfishness, has an intensity of effect that no merely romantic scene could possibly attain." Arthur Symons wrote: "More than any play I have ever seen, this astounding play of Tolstoy's seems to me to fulfil Aristotle's demand upon tragedy: 'Through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions.' I had never read it; my impression was gained directly from seeing it on the stage. Well, though as I listened to it I felt the

pity and fear to be almost insupportable, I left the theatre with a feeling of exultation, as I have left a concert room after hearing a piece of noble and tragic music. How out of such human discords such a divine harmony can be woven I do not know; that is the secret of Tolstoy's genius, as it is the secret of the musician's. Here, achieved in terms of naked horror, I found some of the things that Maeterlinck has aimed at and never quite rendered through an atmosphere and through forms of vague beauty. And I found also another kind of achievement, by the side of which Ibsen's cunning adjustments of reality seemed either trivial or unreal. Here, for once, human life is islanded on the stage, a pin-point of light in an immense darkness; and the sense of that surrounding darkness is conveyed to us as in no other play that I have ever seen, by an awful sincerity and by an unparalleled simplicity. Whether Tolstoy has learnt by instinct some stage-craft which playwrights have been toiling after in vain, or by what conscious and deliberate art he has supplemented instinct, I do not know. But, out of horror and humour, out of the dregs of human life and out of mere faith in those dregs, somehow, as

a man of genius does once in an age, Tolstoy has in this play made for us the great modern play, the great play of the nineteenth century."

That Tolstoy should thus have begun successful play-writing at a time when he was supposed to have turned aside from art, and when he was nearly sixty years of age, was remarkable; but at any rate *The Power of Darkness* was a serious piece, obviously dealing with moral questions which stirred his soul profoundly at the time; and, moreover, he wrote it for the People's Theatre, started to provide first-rate drama for the peasants. It came, therefore, as a yet greater surprise to many people when, three years later, he was persuaded by his daughters to write a comedy for them to perform at home, Yásnaya Polyána.

One knows pretty well how it happened. The taste for play-writing was strong upon him. After more than twelve years devoted to didactic work which gave his sense of humour little or no scope, it was in the nature of things that he should feel some reaction.

At first the play was to have been only a short two-act affair. He did not like to refuse his daughters' request, and thought that if they must

Tolstoy's Daughters Tatyana and Marya Luovna.

act something, it was better that they should act a play voicing his contempt for the follies and extravagance of society and his consciousness of the peasants' needs. Once started on the work, however, it took hold of him and grew and grew, till it became a full-fledged four-act comedy with over thirty speaking characters in it, and with the didactic purpose overwhelmed by the fun, the bustle, and the stage-craft of it.

After many rehearsals this play, *Fruits of Culture,* was performed at Yásnaya Polyána on December 30, 1889, with immense success. Tánya, Tolstoy's eldest daughter, took the part of her namesake in the play very successfully, and Mary, his second daughter, played the cook most admirably.

Tolstoy himself heartily enjoyed the performance. One greatly respects his thirty-year struggle to live a simple life, consuming little and giving much; but one does not love him the less for the occasional lapses into whole-hearted gaiety which light up the record of his life, and show us how very human was this giant. Yásnaya Polyána, on New Year's eve 1889, crammed with guests all in the highest spirits; the large upstairs

room full of spectators laughing till their sides ached at Tolstoy's comedy, is a scene those who would understand Tolstoy should by no means forget or despise. Yet, even then, the other side of his nature, which never let him rest, caused him to note in his Diary: "I am ashamed of all this expense in the midst of poverty."

The whole company threw themselves into the piece with enthusiasm, and acted really well. In particular, V. M. Lopátin, a neighbouring Justice of the Peace, extracted from the part of the Third Peasant so much more than its author had anticipated or even intended, that Tolstoy, in ecstasies, slapped his thighs and laughed till the tears rolled down his cheeks; for he was always extremely susceptible to anything really good, whether in acting or in other forms of art.

I well remember meeting at Yásnaya Polyána, on two different occasions, the sculptor Ginzburg, who was an admirable mimic. He could keep a room full of people entranced while he enacted a Jew tailor stitching clothes, or a nurse tending or neglecting an imaginary baby. None of those present expressed warmer admiration of these performances than did Tolstoy himself, and when he

went for a walk with us afterwards, he said to Ginzburg with great animation:

"Ah, if our theatre realists could only be got to understand that what is wanted is not to put real babies on the stage or show the real messes they make, but to convey, as you do, by voice and feature the real feeling that has to be expressed!"

No blunder made by Tolstoy's critics is more gratuitous or indefensible than the pretence that he was indifferent to the form of art, or demanded of it that it should always have a directly didactic intention.

Not without express purpose did he, in *What is Art?* write, "Art is a means of union among men, joining them together in the same feelings, and indispensable for the life and progress towards well-being of individuals and of humanity"; and he then goes on to say: "Thanks to man's capacity to be infected with the feelings of others by means of art, all that is being lived through by his contemporaries is accessible to him, as well as the feelings experienced by men thousands of years ago, and he has also the possibility of transmitting his own feelings to others."

"If men lacked this capacity of being infected

by art, people would be more separated and hostile to one another, and more savage than wild beasts. Therefore, the activity of art is a most important one — as important as the activity of speech itself, and as generally diffused." And in a memorable passage he adds, "We are accustomed to understand art to be only what we hear and see in theatres, concerts, and exhibitions; together with buildings, statues, poems, novels. . . . But all this is but the smallest part of the art by which we communicate with each other in life. All human life is filled with works of art of every kind — from cradle-song, jest, mimicry, the ornamentation of houses, dress, and utensils, up to church services, buildings, monuments, and triumphal processions. It is all artistic activity."

He insists again and again on the value and prevalence of art, and when speaking of those primitive Christians and others who have wished to repudiate art, he says, "Evidently such people were wrong in repudiating all art, for they denied that which cannot be denied—one of the indispensable means of communication, without which mankind could not exist."

Tolstoy knew very well that a performance

must be excellent in its form and method of expression in order to be a work of art. In the illustration he gives of the performance of music, for instance, he says that for musical execution to be artistic and to transmit feeling, many conditions are necessary, of which the three chief are the pitch, the time, and the strength of the sound, and he adds: "Musical execution is only then art, only then infects, when the sound is neither higher nor lower than it should be — that is, when exactly the infinitely small centre of the required note is taken; when that note is continued exactly as long as needed; and when the strength of the sound is neither more nor less than is required. The slightest deviation of pitch in either direction, the slightest increase or decrease in time, or the slightest strengthening or weakening of the sound beyond what is needed, destroys the perfection and, consequently, the infectiousness of the work. So that the feeling of infection by the art of music, which seems so simple and so easily obtained, is a thing we receive only when the performer finds those infinitely minute degrees which are necessary to perfection in music. It is the same in all arts: a wee bit lighter, a wee bit darker, a wee bit

higher, lower, to the right or the left — in painting; a wee bit weaker or stronger in intonation, or a wee bit sooner or later — in dramatic art; a wee bit omitted, over-emphasised, or exaggerated — in poetry, and there is no contagion. It is only obtained when an artist finds those infinitely minute degrees of which a work of art consists, and only to the extent to which he finds them."

Confronted by words such as these, it is amazing that any one can pretend that Tolstoy was indifferent to quality in the forms of art; but not less amazing is the assertion that only what is directly moralising was considered by him fit subject-matter for art. On this point his words are decisive, when he includes among the subject-matter suitable for good art, "the simplest feelings of common life."

The truth is that, in spite of certain prepossessions which tend to confuse the matter, and in spite of his pugnacious controversial methods, which often led to recrimination rather than to elucidation, Tolstoy's greatness as an artist was increased by the fact that he thoroughly understood the aim and purpose of art; and he was able to speak with authority on the philosophy of art, just because he

was one of the most intellectual and intelligent of the world's artists.

As mentioned in my *Life of Tolstoy,* the main theme in *Fruits of Culture* was drawn from Tolstoy's acquaintance with the Lvóvs, a wealthy and aristocratic family, the head of which wished to convert Tolstoy to spiritualism. The latter sturdily maintained a sceptical attitude, arguing that since mankind has been at the pains to discriminate between *matter* (which can be investigated by the five senses) and *spirit* (which is an affair of the conscience, and cannot be investigated by the senses), we must not again confuse the two by attempting to find physical evidence of spiritual existence. If the phenomena we are investigating is cognisable by the senses, then, he argued, such phenomena are, *ipso facto,* not spiritual, but material. In this, as in certain other matters, Tolstoy, seeking clearness, painted in black and white, and shunned those delicate shades which often elude and perplex us — but without which, after all, it is not always possible to get a true picture.

Fruits of Culture found its way on to the public stage in Russia before *The Power of Darkness,*

and both there and abroad the two plays have been almost equally successful. It is often treated as pure comedy, and the peasants presented as simply comic characters. This Tolstoy did not intend, and did not like. He meant the hardness of their lot and their urgent need of land to stand out in sharp contrast to the waste of wealth by the cultured crowd.

During the last thirty years of his life Tolstoy himself used, as is well known, to dress much like a peasant, though never in the beggar-pilgrim garb in which he is made to figure in a *Life* of him recently published in this country; and it happened that one winter's day, when *Fruits of Culture* was being rehearsed in Túla (the nearest town to Yásnaya Polyána), he went, by request, to the hall where it was being staged. Wearing his rough sheepskin overcoat, he attempted to enter, but was roughly shoved out by the doorkeeper, who told him it was no place for the likes of him!

The same year the play was presented at Tsarskoe Selo, by amateurs drawn from the highest circles of Court society, and was witnessed by a dozen Grand Dukes and Grand-Duchesses as well as by the Tsar himself, who warmly

thanked the performers for the pleasure it had given him. So the whirligig of time brought it about that Tolstoy, who twenty-three years before had just missed his chance of acting at the Imperial Court, now had a play of his own performed there, while he himself was being mistaken for a peasant, and on that account treated with gross indignity.

We have Tolstoy's word for it that he would have written more plays had it not been for the censor. He once said, "I feel certain the censor would not pass my plays. You would not believe how, from the very commencement of my activity, that horrible censor question has tormented me! I wanted to write what I felt; but at the same time it occurred to me that what I wrote would not be permitted, and involuntarily I had to abandon the work. I abandoned, and went on abandoning, and meanwhile the years passed away."

He once expressed surprise that, in *Fruits of Culture,* the drunken man-cook's monologue on the ways of the rich folk was allowed to be performed.

Of the three plays left by Tolstoy for publication after his death, one is a short two-act Temperance play called in English *The Cause of it All*

(the Russian title is a colloquialism difficult to render, but "From it all evil flows" is as near as one can get to it). It does not claim to be a piece of much importance, but if ever it is staged, it should act easily and well.

Another of these posthumous plays is *The Man That Was Dead* (The Live Corpse), a powerful piece, in which Tolstoy introduces one of those gipsy choirs which had such an influence on him (and still more on his brother Sergius) when he was a young man of twenty to twenty-three, before he went to the Caucasus and entered the army.

The position of the gipsy choirs in Russia is a peculiar one. Reputedly Egyptian in origin ("Pharaoh's Tribe," one of the characters in the play calls them), they live a life quite distinct from that of the Russians, yet not at all resembling that of the itinerant gipsies one meets travelling about with caravans in England. They possess a remarkable musical talent, having a kind of music both vocal and instrumental all their own. They perform at special restaurants in the suburbs of Moscow, and also give concerts in public halls and at private houses. It is no more unusual for Russian noblemen to marry gipsy girls

than it is for English noblemen to marry Gaiety girls. The songs referred to in Scene II are all well-known gipsy songs, and if staged with a real gipsy choir to perform them, this should be one of the most striking scenes in the play.

Tolstoy himself held that gipsy music deserved to rank among the best kinds of music, on account of its genuine spontaneity, the depth of feeling in it, and the exquisite perfection with which it is rendered by the gipsies. His own daughters used to play and sing gipsy songs admirably.

The main plot of this play, like that of *The Power of Darkness,* was supplied to Tolstoy by his friend N. V. Davýdov, a Judge and a Lecturer on criminal law at Moscow University, who frequently drew his attention to cases that occurred in the Law Courts, and which Davýdov thought might provide suitable subjects for a story or a drama.

Curiously enough, after Tolstoy had written this play, he was visited first by the stepson of the "live corpse," and then by the "live corpse" himself. The latter had been convicted, had served his time, and had returned to Moscow. He had given up drink and was seeking means of subsist-

ence, when he heard of the play Tolstoy was writing, and that it was founded on his own case. Tolstoy questioned him carefully, and as a result of the conversation rewrote the play in order to set the conduct of the corpse in a more favourable light than before. In this revised version Tolstoy makes him finally commit suicide, whereas in an earlier version the law took its course as it did in real life, and matters only settled down and adjusted themselves after his victims had served their sentences and justice had ceased to meddle.

Tolstoy also gave the "corpse" a letter to Davýdov, who obtained for him some small post at the Law Courts, where he served till his death; no one but his benefactors and his own family knowing who he was. Some time after his death Davýdov told me this about him.

Part of the attraction of the story for Tolstoy lay in the fact that the intervention of the law did no good to any one, but only harm to all concerned; for it was part and parcel of Tolstoy's non-resistant theory that Law Courts and the Administration of justice are purely noxious.

The Man That Was Dead has already been staged at the Artistic Theatre in Moscow, and it

is to be hoped that we shall see it in London; but the last of Tolstoy's plays, *The Light That Shines in Darkness,* was left unfinished, and is hardly likely to be produced, unless by the Stage Society, or some similar organisation. In Russia it is prohibited on account of its allusions to the refusal of military service.

Yet it is in some ways the most interesting of Tolstoy's posthumous works. It is obviously not strictly autobiographical, for Tolstoy was not assassinated as the hero of the piece is, nor was his daughter engaged to be married to a young prince who refused military service. But like some of his other writings, the play is semi-autobiographical. In it, not only has Tolstoy utilised personal experiences, but more than that, he answers the question so often asked: Why, holding his views, did he not free himself from property before he grew old?

Some people, and especially some of those most devoted to Tolstoy's memory, are sure to suppose and to declare that he intends Nicholas Ivanovich Sarintsev to be taken as a faithful portrait of himself. But to understand Tolstoy one has to recognise the duality of his character, which he never

concealed and often mentioned; and the hero of *The Light That Shines in Darkness* has none of this duality. He represents only one side of Tolstoy, and is not at all the sort of man, for instance, who would have written or enjoyed *Fruits of Culture.*

Not only are the facts different to the real ones, and the character of the hero much simpler than Tolstoy's own, but the problem at issue between Sarintsev and his wife is not quite the same as the one at issue between Tolstoy and the Countess. With that unerring artistic tact which Tolstoy never lost, he causes Nicholas Ivanovich Sarintsev to make a definite proposal to retain "fifty acres and the kitchen garden and the flooded meadow," which would "bring in about £50 a year." Now what in real life most frightened the Countess, was not that she was asked to accept poverty, but that she was asked to manage a household in which there should be no limit to the giving up.

Tolstoy held, as he says in *The Demands of Love,* that if people begin giving up and set any limits thereto, then "life will be hell, or will become hell, if they are not hypocrites. . . . Where and how can one stop? Only those will

find a stopping-place who are strangers to the feeling of the reality of the brotherhood of man, or who are so accustomed to lie that they no longer notice the difference between truth and falsehood. The fact is, no such stopping-place can exist. . . . If you give the beggar your last shillings, you will be left without bread to-morrow; but to refuse means to turn from that for the sake of which one lives."

Had that point, and the need of admitting to one's cottage "the tramp with his lice and his typhus," and giving away the children's last cup of milk, been pressed home in the play as it was in Tolstoy's teaching, some of the readers' sympathy would go over to the side of the wife called on to face such conditions for herself and her family; and that is why Tolstoy's artistic instinct induced him to introduce a definite proposal quite at variance with the demands of his own teaching.

And again, the conflict in the play is between the husband on the one side and the wife and family on the other. There is no mention of a friend urging the husband on in opposition to the wife. Those who closely followed Tolstoy's

own fate well know that on this point also the play does not describe his own case.

Not the less on that account does the play most touchingly present to us the intense tragedy of Tolstoy's later years, and the impossibility in which he found himself of acting so as neither to violate his own conscience nor to evoke anger in the hearts of those nearest to him. His religion had brought "not peace, but a sword"; and it was because he believed in it so firmly, and yet shrank from treating those of his own household as his foes, that his struggle was so intense, and that for more than thirty years he hesitated before he decided to leave wife and home, the scenes endeared to him by childhood's memory, and the spot where he hoped to be (and eventually was) buried — the spot where his brother had hidden the green stick on which he said was inscribed the secret of how to banish from the world all sin, bitterness, discord, and evil — all, in short, that makes us sad or sorry.

Plays Tolstoy found more difficult to write than stories or novels; for in the novel or story it is possible to stop and explain, and gradually to pre-

pare an incident or develop a character, whereas in a play the situations and clash of characters and wills have to be presented ripe and ready. Novel-writing he compared to painting, in which many shades may be employed; plays he compared to sculpture, where all must be clear-cut, definite, and compact.

He often remarked that subjects suitable for novels are not suitable for plays and *vice versâ;* and he expressed satisfaction that he had never been obliged to witness the dramatised versions of *Resurrection* or of *Anna Karénina* which have been staged. He had nothing at all to do with those productions, and quite disapproved of them.

Of his plays in general Tolstoy once remarked to me: "When writing them I never anticipated the importance that has been attributed to them." While he fully recognised, and perhaps at times overrated, the value of his didactic and propagandist writings, he was often inclined to underrate the value of the artistic work which during his later years he sometimes undertook more or less as a recreation, and on that account was the more ready to treat lightly. It was mentioned by the Editor in the first volume of these Posthu-

mous Works of Tolstoy's, the translations were chosen by an agent of the executors; and I am responsible only for the novel *Hadjo-Murad* which will appear in the third volume.

AYLMER MAUDE.

THE LIGHT THAT SHINES IN DARKNESS

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

NICHOLAS IVANOVICH SARINTSEV.
MARIE IVANOVNA (MASHA), his wife.
LUBA (LUBOV NICOLAEVNA), MISSIE, } their daughters.
STEPHEN, VANIA, } their sons.
MITROFAN DMITRICH. Tutor to Vania.
ALEXANDRA IVANOVNA. Sister to Marie Ivanovna.
PETER SEMENOVICH KOKHOVTSEV. Her husband.
LISA. Their daughter.
PRINCESS CHEREMSHANOV.
BORIS. Her son.
TONIA. Her daughter.
FATHER VASILY (VASILY ERMILOVICH). A village priest.
FATHER GERASIM.
ALEXIS MIKHAILOVICH STARKOVSKY.
NURSE and FOOTMEN in Sarintsev's house.
IVAN, SEBASTIAN, EPHRAIM, PETER, } Peasants.
A PEASANT WOMAN. Ivan's wife.

MALASHKA. Ivan's daughter.
ALEXANDER PETROVICH. A tramp.
A country POLICE SERGEANT.
LAWYER.
YAKOV. Carpenter.
CLERK.
SENTRIES.
GENERAL.
COLONEL.
AIDE-DE-CAMP.
SOLDIERS.
POLICE OFFICER.
STENOGRAPHER.
CHAPLAIN.
PATIENTS IN HOSPITAL.
SICK OFFICER.
HEAD PHYSICIAN.
HOUSE SURGEON.
WARDERS.
COUNTESS and other GUESTS at Sarintsev's dance.
PIANIST.

ACT I

The stage represents a covered veranda in a rich country-house. In front of the veranda are a flower garden, a tennis ground, and a croquet lawn. The children with their governess are playing croquet. On the veranda are seated: MARIE IVANOVNA SARINTSEV, *a handsome, elegant woman of forty; her sister* ALEXANDRA IVANOVNA KOKHOVTSEV, *a fat, positive, and stupid woman of forty-five: and her husband,* PETER SEMENOVICH KOKHOVTSEV, *a fat, stout, clumsy man of slovenly appearance, wearing a summer suit and eye-glasses. They all sit at a table laid for breakfast with samovar and coffee. All are drinking coffee;* PETER SEMENOVICH *is smoking.*

ALEXANDRA.

If you were not my sister, and Nicholas Ivanovich were not your husband, but merely an acquaintance, I should find all this novel and charming, and should perhaps uphold him. I should have found it very nice. But when I see your husband playing the fool, simply playing the fool, I cannot help telling you what I think of it. And I shall tell him too, that husband of yours. I shall speak straight out to dear Nicholas. I am not afraid of anybody.

MARIE.

I do not mind in the least: I see it myself. But I really do not think it is as important as all that.

ALEXANDRA.

You may not think so; but I assure you, if you let it go on, you will all be beggared. That is what will come of this sort of thing. . . .

PETER.

Beggared, indeed! With their fortune!

ALEXANDRA.

Yes, beggared. Don't interrupt me. Of course, you always think that anything a man does is right.

PETER.

I don't know. I only say. . . .

ALEXANDRA.

You never know what you are talking about, and when once you men begin your nonsense, there is no knowing where it will end. All I say is, that if I were in your place, I should not allow it. I should have put a stop to all this. I never heard of such a thing. The husband, the head of the family, does nothing, neglects his affairs, gives everything away, and plays the bountiful

right and left. I know how it will end. I know all about it.

PETER.

(*to* MARIE IVANOVNA.) Do explain to me, Marie, what this new fad of his is. There are Liberals, County Councils, the Constitution Schools, reading-rooms and all the rest of it — I understand all that. Then there are Socialists, strikes, an eight-hour day — I understand that too. But what is all this? Do explain.

MARIE.

He told you all about it yesterday.

PETER.

I own that I could not understand. The Gospel, the Sermon on the Mount, that churches are unnecessary. But where are we to pray, and all that?

MARIE.

That is the worst of it. He would destroy everything and put nothing in its place.

PETER.

How did it begin?

MARIE.

It began last year, when his sister died. He became very gloomy, perpetually spoke of death,

and then fell ill, as you know. And after his typhoid fever he changed entirely.

ALEXANDRA.

Still he came to see us in Moscow in the spring, and he was very amiable and played cards. He was very nice and quite normal.

MARIE.

Yes, but he was not the same.

PETER.

In what way?

MARIE.

He was perfectly indifferent to his family, and the New Testament had become an obsession. He read it all day; at night he got up to read it instead of sleeping, making notes and copying out passages. Then he began to visit bishops and aged monks, to discuss religion.

ALEXANDRA.

Did he go to confession and take the sacrament?

MARIE.

Before that he had not done so since his marriage, that is for twenty-five years. But at the time I am speaking of he confessed and took com-

munion at the monastery, and immediately afterward decided it was unnecessary to confess, or even to go to church at all.

ALEXANDRA.

You see how inconsistent he is. A month ago he went to church and kept all the fasts; now suddenly he thinks all that is useless.

MARIE.

Well, talk to him yourself.

ALEXANDRA.

I will; indeed I will.

PETER.

All that does not matter much.

ALEXANDRA.

It seems to you that it does not matter, because men have no religion.

PETER.

Do let me speak. I say that that is not the point. If he denies the Church, where does the New Testament come in?

MARIE.

He says we are to live in accordance with the Sermon on the Mount, and give everything away.

PETER.

How are we to live ourselves if we give everything away?

ALEXANDRA.

And where does the Sermon on the Mount order us to shake hands with our footmen? It says "blessed are the meek," but there is not a word about shaking hands.

MARIE.

Of course he is fanatical in this, as he always is when he takes up anything. At one time it was music, then schools. . . . But that does not make it any easier for me.

PETER.

Why has he gone to town?

MARIE.

He did not tell me, but I know he has gone to attend the hearing of the timber-stealing case. The peasants cut down some of our forest.

PETER.

Those big fir-trees?

MARIE.

Yes. They were condemned to pay for them, and sentenced to imprisonment, and their appeal

is to be heard to-day. I am sure that is why he went.

ALEXANDRA.

He will forgive them, and to-morrow they will come and chop down all the trees in his park.

MARIE.

They seem to be beginning already. All the apple trees are broken, and the fields trampled. He forgives it all.

PETER.

How extraordinary!

ALEXANDRA.

That is exactly why I say that you must interfere. If it continues much longer — everything will go. I think it is your duty as a mother to take some steps.

MARIE.

What can I do?

ALEXANDRA.

What can you do, indeed? Put a stop to it, make him understand that it is impossible. You have children. What an example to set them!

MARIE.

It is hard, but I try to bear it, and to hope that

this will pass as all his other infatuations have done.

ALEXANDRA.

Yes; but God helps those who help themselves. You must make him feel that he is not alone, and that he is not living in the proper way.

MARIE.

The worst of it all is that he takes no interest in the children. I have to settle everything by myself. On the one hand I have a baby, and on the other, grown-up children — a girl and a boy — who both need attention and guidance, and I am alone. He used to be such a careful and tender father. Now he does not care about anything. Last night I told him Vania was lazy and had failed again in his examinations, and he said it would be much better for him to leave school altogether.

PETER.

Where would he send him?

MARIE.

Nowhere. That is the horrible part of it. Everything is wrong, but he does not say what we are to do.

PETER.

How strange!

ALEXANDRA.

Not at all strange. It is just the usual way you men have of finding fault with everything and doing nothing yourselves.

MARIE.

Stephen has finished his studies and must decide what he is going to do, but his father will not say anything to him about it. He wanted to enter the Civil Service — his father said it was useless; he wanted to enter the Horse Guards — Nicholas Ivanovich disapproved. The boy asked what he was to do, and his father asked why he did not go and plough: that would be far better than the Civil Service. What is he to do? He comes to me for advice, and I have to decide. But the means of carrying out any plan are in his father's hands.

ALEXANDRA.

You ought to tell Nicholas so plainly.

MARIE.

Yes; I must talk to him.

ALEXANDRA.

Tell him plainly that you cannot stand it: that you do your duty and that he must do his. Otherwise, he had better make the property over to you.

MARIE.

Oh! that is so unpleasant.

ALEXANDRA.

I will tell him, if you like. I will tell him so straight out.

(A young priest enters, somewhat shy and nervous. He carries a book and shakes hands with all present.)

FATHER VASILY.

I have come to see Nicholas Ivanovich. I've — I've brought back a book.

MARIE.

He has gone to town, but he will soon return.

ALEXANDRA.

What book did he lend you?

FATHER VASILY.

It is Renan — yes — a book — the Life of Jesus.

PETER.

Oh! what a book for you to read.

ALEXANDRA.

(*contemptuously.*) Did Nicholas Ivanovich give you that to read? Well, do you agree with Nicholas Ivanovich, and with Monsieur Renan?

FATHER VASILY.

(*excited, lighting a cigarette.*) Yes, Nicholas Ivanovich gave it to me to read. Of course I do not agree with it. If I did I should not be, so to speak, a servant of the Church.

ALEXANDRA.

And since you are, so to speak, a true servant of the Church, why don't you convert Nicholas Ivanovich?

FATHER VASILY.

Everybody, if I may say so, has his own views on these subjects. And Nicholas Ivanovich, if I may say so, says much that is true. But on the main point he is in error concerning er — er — er — the Church.

ALEXANDRA.

And what are the true things that Nicholas Ivanovich says? Is it true that the Sermon on the Mount bids us give away our possessions to strangers, and let our family be beggars?

FATHER VASILY.

The family is, so to speak, held sacred in the Church, and the fathers of the Church have bestowed their blessing on the family, haven't they? But the highest perfection requires — well, yes, requires renunciation of earthly goods.

ALEXANDRA.

That is all very well for saints, but ordinary mortals ought simply to act like good Christians.

FATHER VASILY.

Nobody can tell what he was sent to earth for.

ALEXANDRA.

You are married, I suppose?

FATHER VASILY.

Certainly.

ALEXANDRA.

And have you got any children?

FATHER VASILY.

Yes, two.

ALEXANDRA.

Then why don't you renounce earthly joys instead of smoking cigarettes?

FATHER VASILY.

It is, I may say, owing to my weakness and my unworthiness that I do not.

ALEXANDRA.

It seems to me that instead of bringing Nicholas Ivanovich to his senses, you are upholding him. I tell you frankly it is not right.

(*Enter* NURSE.)

NURSE.

Don't you hear baby crying? Please come to him.

MARIE.

I'm coming — I'm coming. (*Exit.*)

ALEXANDRA.

I am so sorry for my sister. I see how she suffers. It is no easy matter to manage a household — seven children, and one of them a baby at the breast. And he with his new-fangled theories — I really think he is not quite right here (*points to her head.*) Now tell me truly, what is this new religion you have discovered?

FATHER VASILY.

I don't quite understand, if I may say so.

ALEXANDRA.

Please do not pretend you do not understand. You know perfectly well what I am asking.

FATHER VASILY.

But, pardon me —

ALEXANDRA.

I ask you what this creed is, according to which you must shake hands with all peasants, allow them to cut down your forest, give them money for drink, and forsake your own family.

FATHER VASILY.

I do not know.

ALEXANDRA.

He says it is the Christian teaching. You are a priest of the Orthodox Church. Therefore, you ought to know and ought to say whether the Christian teaching encourages stealing.

FATHER VASILY.

But I —

ALEXANDRA.

Otherwise, why do you call yourself a priest, and wear long hair and a cassock?

FATHER VASILY.

But we are never asked such things.

ALEXANDRA.

Really? Well I ask you? Yesterday Nicholas Ivanovich said the Gospel command is: "Give to every man that asks." How is that to be interpreted?

FATHER VASILY.

I think in the simplest sense.

ALEXANDRA.

I do not think so at all. I think it means, as we were always taught, that everybody has what God has given him.

FATHER VASILY.

Of course, but still —

ALEXANDRA.

It is quite evident that you are on his side. I was told you were; and it is very wrong of you, I tell you quite frankly. If it were some schoolmistress, or some boy who accepted his every word — but you, in your position, ought to understand what your responsibilities are.

FATHER VASILY.

I try to.

ALEXANDRA.

How can he be called religious when he does not go to church, and does not recognise the sacraments? And you, instead of bringing him to reason, read Renan with him, and interpret the Gospel as you like.

FATHER VASILY.

(*agitated.*) I cannot answer. I am — I am — amazed, and would rather not say anything.

ALEXANDRA.

Oh! if I were a bishop I would teach you to read Renan and smoke cigarettes.

PETER.

Stop, for Heaven's sake! By what right —?

ALEXANDRA.

Please don't lecture me. I am sure Father Vasily does not mind. Well, I have said all I had to say. It would be much worse if I had any ill-feeling. Is not that so?

FATHER VASILY.

Pardon me if I have expressed myself badly — pardon me. (*Awkward silence.*)

(*Enter* LUBA *and* LISA.)

(LUBA, *the daughter of* MARIE IVANOVNA, *is a pretty, energetic girl of twenty.* LISA, *the daughter of* ALEXANDRA IVANOVNA, *is older. Both wear shawls on their heads, and carry baskets — they are going mushrooming in the woods. They greet* ALEXANDRA IVANOVNA, PETER SEMENOVICH, *and the priest.*)

LUBA.

Where is mother?

ALEXANDRA.

She has just gone to nurse the baby.

PETER.

Mind you bring back plenty of mushrooms. A village girl brought some beauties this morning. I would go with you, but it is so hot.

LISA.

Do come, father.

ALEXANDRA.

Yes, do go. You are getting too fat.

PETER.

Very well. But I must get some cigarettes.
(*Exit.*)

ALEXANDRA.

Where are all the other young people?

LUBA.

Stephen has gone to the station on his bicycle; Metrofan Alexandrovich has gone to town with father; the little ones are playing croquet; and Vania is romping with the dogs in the porch.

ALEXANDRA.

Has Stephen come to any decision?

LUBA.

Yes, he is going to enlist as a volunteer. He was horribly rude to father yesterday.

ALEXANDRA.

Well, he has a good deal to bear. Even a worm will turn. The boy wants to begin life, and he is told to go and plough.

LUBA.

Father did not say that. He said . . .

ALEXANDRA.

It makes no difference. The boy must make a start, and whatever he proposes is found fault with. Oh, there he is!

(*Enter* STEPHEN *on bicycle.*)

ALEXANDRA.

Talk of an angel and you hear his wings. We were just speaking of you. Luba says that you did not speak nicely to your father yesterday.

STEPHEN.

Not at all. Nothing particular happened. He expressed his opinion, and I expressed mine. It is not my fault if our views do not agree. Luba understands nothing, and is always ready to criticise.

ALEXANDRA.

What did you decide?

STEPHEN.

I don't know what father decided. I'm afraid he does not know himself; but I have made up my mind to join the Horse Guards as a volunteer. It is only in our house that difficulties are raised

about everything. It is quite simple. I have finished my studies; I have got to do my military service. It would be unpleasant to serve in the army with coarse, drunken officers, so I shall join the Guards, where I have friends.

ALEXANDRA.

Why did your father object?

STEPHEN.

Father? Oh, what's the good of talking about him. He is infatuated with his *idée fixe,* and sees only what he wants to see. He says that the military is the most dastardly of all the services, therefore I ought not to serve, and therefore he gives me no money.

LISA.

No, Stephen, that was not what he said. I was there. He said that if it is impossible to get out of it, one should at least wait till one is called as a recruit, but that to volunteer is to choose that service oneself.

STEPHEN.

It is I, not he, who will serve. He was an officer himself.

LISA.

He did not say that he would not give you

money, but that he could not participate in a matter that was contrary to all his principles.

STEPHEN.

Principles have nothing to do with it. I've got to serve, and there's an end of it.

LISA.

I only said what I heard.

STEPHEN.

I know. You agree with father in everything. Auntie, did you know that? Lisa is always on father's side.

LISA.

When it is a question of justice.

ALEXANDRA.

Oh, I know Lisa is always on the side of nonsense. She has a knack of finding it. She scents it from afar.

(Enter VANIA. *He runs on to the veranda in a red blouse, accompanied by the dogs, with a telegram in his hand.)*

VANIA.

(*to* LUBA.) Guess who is coming!

LUBA.

Why should I guess? Give me the telegram. (*Stretches out her hand for it.* VANIA *holds it out of her reach.*)

VANIA.

I won't give it to you, and I won't tell you. It is some one who will make you blush.

LUBA.

Nonsense! Who is it from?

VANIA.

Aha! You are blushing, you are! Aunt Aline, isn't it true that she's blushing?

LUBA.

What nonsense! Aunt Aline, who is it from?

ALEXANDRA.

The Cheremshanovs.

LUBA.

Oh!

VANIA.

"Oh!" indeed. Why are you blushing?

LUBA.

Auntie, show me the telegram. (*Reads.*) "Arrive by mail train; all three.— Cheremsha-

novs." That means the princess, Boris, and Tonia. Well, I am very glad.

VANIA.

Of course you are very glad. Stephen, see how she's blushing.

STEPHEN.

Oh, drop it. You keep on saying the same thing over and over again.

VANIA.

You say that because you're a bit smitten by Tonia yourself. You'll have to draw lots, because sister and brother may not marry brother and sister.

STEPHEN.

Don't talk such rubbish. You'd better be careful. I've warned you several times.

LISA.

If they come by the mail train they ought to be here directly.

LUBA.

That's true. Then we had better not go out.

(*Enter* PETER SEMENOVICH *with cigarettes.*)

LUBA.

Uncle Peter, we are not going.

PETER.

Why?

LUBA.

The Cheremshanovs will be here directly. We had better have one set at tennis before they arrive. Stephen, will you play?

STEPHEN.

All right.

LUBA.

Vania and I against you and Lisa. Agreed? Well, then, I'll go and get the balls and call the village children. (*Exit.*)

PETER.

So much for my walk.

FATHER VASILY.

(*rising to go.*) Good-bye.

ALEXANDRA.

Oh, wait a little, Father Vasily. I want to talk to you, and Nicholas Ivanovich will soon be here.

FATHER VASILY.

(*sits down and lights another cigarette.*) He may be some time yet.

ALEXANDRA.

A carriage has just driven up; I expect it is he.

PETER.

Which Princess Cheremshanov is it? Is it possible that her maiden name was Golitsine?

ALEXANDRA.

Yes, yes, that nice Princess Cheremshanov who lived in Rome with her aunt.

PETER.

I shall be glad to see her. I have not seen her since the time when we used to sing duets together in Rome. She sang very well. She has two children, I believe.

ALEXANDRA.

Yes, and they are both coming with her.

PETER.

I did not know they were so intimate with the Sarintsevs.

ALEXANDRA.

They are not intimate; but they were abroad

together last year, and I believe that the princess has designs on Luba for her son. She knows a thing or two.

PETER.

The Cheremshanovs were rich themselves.

ALEXANDRA.

They were. The prince is still alive, but he has dissipated his fortune, and has taken to drink. She petitioned the Tsar, saved a few crumbs, and left him. But she brought up her children splendidly. The daughter is an excellent musician, and the son went through the university, and is very nice. Still I do not think Masha is particularly pleased. This is not a time for guests. Ah, there is Nicholas.

(*Enter* NICHOLAS IVANOVICH.)

NICHOLAS.

Good morning, Aline. Hallo! Peter Semenov. (*To the priest.*) How do you do, Vasily Ermilovich. (*He shakes hands.*)

ALEXANDRA.

There is some coffee here. Shall I pour it out? It is not very hot, but it can be warmed up. (*She rings.*)

NICHOLAS.

No, thank you. I have had breakfast. Where is Masha?

ALEXANDRA.

She is nursing the baby.

NICHOLAS.

Is she well?

ALEXANDRA.

Pretty well. Have you done all your business?

NICHOLAS.

Yes. I think I will have some tea or some coffee if there is any. (*To the priest.*) Have you brought the book? Have you read it? I have been thinking about you all the way.

(*Enter footman; bows.* NICHOLAS *shakes hands with him.*)

ALEXANDRA.

(*shrugging her shoulders, and exchanging glances with her husband.*) Heat up the samovar, please.

NICHOLAS.

Never mind, Aline. I do not want anything, and if I do, I can drink it as it is.

MISSIE.

(*seeing her father, runs from the croquet ground, and clasps her arms around his neck.*) Father, come along.

NICHOLAS.

(*fondling her.*) Directly, directly. Let me have something to drink. Go and play. I will come soon. (*Sits down at the table, drinks tea, and eats.*)

ALEXANDRA.

Were they found guilty?

NICHOLAS.

Yes. They pleaded guilty. (*To the priest.*) I imagine Renan did not convince you.

ALEXANDRA.

But you disagreed with the verdict?

NICHOLAS.

(*annoyed.*) Of course I did. (*To priest.*) The main question for you lies, not in the divinity of Christ, not in the history of Christianity, but in the Church . . .

ALEXANDRA.

How was that? They confessed themselves: you gave them the lie. They were not stealing, only taking . . .

NICHOLAS.

(*begins speaking to the priest, then turning decidedly to* ALEXANDRA IVANOVNA.) My dear Aline, do not worry me with innuendos and pin-pricks.

ALEXANDRA.

I am not doing anything of the sort.

NICHOLAS.

If you really want to know why I cannot prosecute the peasants for cutting down some trees which they badly needed. . . .

ALEXANDRA.

I dare say they need this samovar also.

NICHOLAS.

Well, if you want me to tell you why I cannot allow men to be imprisoned for felling ten trees in a wood that is considered mine. . . .

ALEXANDRA.

Considered so by every one.

PETER.

There you are, arguing again. I shall go out with the dogs. (*He leaves the veranda.*)

NICHOLAS.

Even supposing I were to consider that wood

mine — though that is impossible — we have 2,250 acres of forest, with approximately 200 trees on each — I think that makes about 450,000 in all. They felled 10 — that is $\frac{1}{45000}$ part. Well, is it worth while, is it possible, to drag a man away from his family and put him in prison for such a thing?

STEPHEN.

Well, if you don't prosecute for this $\frac{1}{45000}$ part, the rest of the 45,000 will also soon be felled.

NICHOLAS.

I only gave that answer in reply to your aunt. In reality, I have no right to this forest. The land belongs to all — that is, to no individual — and we personally have never done a stroke of work on it.

STEPHEN.

Oh, no! You saved up, and you looked after the land.

NICHOLAS.

How did I get enough to save up, and when did I ever look after the forest myself? But there! you can't prove such things to a man who feels no shame in injuring others.

STEPHEN.

No one is injuring others.

NICHOLAS.

If he is not ashamed of being idle — of living on the labour of others — it cannot be proved, and all the political economy you learnt at the university only serves to justify your position.

STEPHEN.

On the contrary, science destroys all prejudices.

NICHOLAS.

Well, that does not matter. What does matter to me is the fact that if I were in Ephim's place, I should do just what he did; and having done it I should be in despair if I were imprisoned, and therefore, since I *would do unto others as I would be done by,* I cannot prosecute him, and must do my best to get him off.

Together

PETER.

But, in that case, it is not possible to own anything.

ALEXANDRA.

Then it is much more profitable to steal than to work.

STEPHEN.

You never answer one's arguments. I say that he who economises has a right to use his savings.

NICHOLAS.

(*smiling.*) I do not know which of you to answer. (*to* PETER.) It is not possible to own anything.

ALEXANDRA.

If that is so, one cannot have clothes or a crust of bread. One must give up everything, and life becomes impossible.

NICHOLAS.

It is impossible to live as we live.

STEPHEN.

Then we must die. Therefore that teaching is no good for life.

NICHOLAS.

On the contrary, it is given only for life. Yes, we must relinquish everything — not only a forest by which we profit, though we have never seen it, but we should give up our clothes and our bread even.

ALEXANDRA.

And the children's bread also?

NICHOLAS.

Yes, the children's also — and not bread only — we must give up ourselves. That is the whole teaching of Christ. We must use all our efforts to give up ourselves.

STEPHEN.

To die, therefore?

NICHOLAS.

Yes, if you die *for others* it would be good both for yourself and for others; but the fact remains that man is not simply a spirit, but a spirit in the flesh; and the flesh impels us to live for self, while the enlightened spirit urges us to live for God, for others; and the result of this conflict makes us take a middle course. The nearer we attain to God the better. Therefore the more we try to live for God the better. The flesh will make sufficient efforts on its own account.

STEPHEN.

Why take a middle course? If such a life is best, then one should give up everything and die.

NICHOLAS.

It would be splendid. Try to do it, and you will find it good for you as well as for others.

ALEXANDRA.

No, all this is neither clear nor simple. It is dragged in by the hair.

NICHOLAS.

What am I to do? I cannot make you understand. Enough of this!

STEPHEN.

Enough, indeed! I do not understand. (*Exit.*)

NICHOLAS.

(*to the priest.*) Well, what did you think of the book?

FATHER VASILY.

(*agitated.*) I hardly know what to say. The historical side is sufficiently studied, but it is hardly convincingly or satisfactorily proved — perhaps because the data are insufficient. You cannot prove the divinity or non-divinity of Christ historically. There is only one unanswerable proof. . . .

(*During the conversation all, one after the other, leave the room — first the ladies, then* STEPHEN, *and finally* PETER SEMENOVICH, *leaving the priest and* NICHOLAS *alone.*)

NICHOLAS.

You mean the Church?

FATHER VASILY.

Yes, of course, the Church; the testimony of men — well, of truly holy men, shall we say?

NICHOLAS.

It would certainly be excellent if such an infallible authority existed which we could trust, and

it is desirable that it should exist. But its desirability is no proof that it does exist.

FATHER VASILY.

I contend that it does prove it. God could not, as it were, let His law be distorted, be badly interpreted; and He had to institute a — well — a custodian of His truths. He had to, hadn't He, to prevent the distortion of these truths?

NICHOLAS.

Very well; but you set out to prove the truths themselves, and now you are proving the truth of the custodians.

FATHER VASILY.

Well, in regard to that, we must, so to speak, believe.

NICHOLAS.

Believe? We cannot live without belief. We must believe, but not what others tell us; only what we are led to by the course of our own thoughts, our own reason . . . the belief in God, in the true life everlasting.

FATHER VASILY.

Reason may deceive you — each man has his own —

NICHOLAS.

(*warmly.*) That is horrible blasphemy! God has given us one holy instrument by which to know the truth — one that can unite us all, and we distrust it!

FATHER VASILY.

But how can we trust it when there is so much difference of opinion — isn't there?

NICHOLAS.

Where is there any difference of opinion as to two and two making four; as to our not doing to others what we do not wish to be done to ourselves; as to there being a cause for everything; and such truths as these? We all recognise these truths because they are in accordance with our reason. As to such questions as what God revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai, whether or not Buddha flew away on a sunbeam, or whether Mohammed and Christ flew up to heaven — and things of that sort — we all disagree.

FATHER VASILY.

No, we do not all disagree. All who have the truth are united in one faith in the God Christ.

NICHOLAS.

You are not united then because you all differ,

so why should I believe you rather than a Buddhist lama? Simply because I happened to be born in your faith?

(*Sounds of dispute from the tennis-court. "Out." "No, it was not." "I saw it."*

During the conversation the FOOTMAN *rearranges the table, bringing in fresh tea and coffee.*)

NICHOLAS.

(*continuing.*) You say the Church gives union. But, on the contrary, the worst differences were always caused by the Church. "How often would I have gathered Thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings."

FATHER VASILY.

It was so before Christ. Christ united all.

NICHOLAS.

Christ united us all, but we became disunited because we understood Him wrongly. He destroyed all Churches.

FATHER VASILY.

Then what does "tell the Church" mean?

NICHOLAS.

It is not a question of words, nor do these words apply to the Church. The whole thing is the spirit of the teaching. Christ's teaching is universal, and contains all beliefs, and does not contain anything that is exclusive — neither the resurrection, nor the divinity of Christ, nor the sacraments — indeed, nothing that can disunite.

FATHER VASILY.

Well, that is your interpretation of the Christian teaching; but the Christian teaching is entirely founded on the divinity of Christ and His resurrection.

NICHOLAS.

That is why Churches are so horrible. They disunite by declaring that they possess the full, certain, and infallible truth —" filling us with the Holy Ghost." It began with the first meeting of the apostles. From that moment they began to affirm that they were possessed of full and *exclusive* truth. Why, if I say that there is a God, that the world began, all will agree with me, and this recognition of God will unite us; but if I say there is a god Brahma, or a Jewish god, or a Trinity — such a divinity disunites. Men want to unite and invent a means to that end, but they disregard the only certain means of union — an

aspiration after truth. It is as if in a great building, where the light falls from the roof on to the middle of the floor, men were to stand in groups in the corners instead of going into the light. If they went into the light they would, without thinking about it, be united.

FATHER VASILY.

But how would you guide the people without having, so to speak, a fixed truth?

NICHOLAS.

That is the horror of it. Each of us has his own soul to save, has God's work to do, and we are all anxious about saving and teaching others. And what do we teach them? It is simply horrible to think that at the end of the nineteenth century we are teaching that God created the world in six days, then sent a flood, putting all the animals into the Ark, and all the absurd nonsense of the Old Testament; and then that Christ ordered us to be baptised in water, or the absurdity of the redemption without which you cannot be saved; then that Christ flew away to skies which do not exist, and there sits at the right hand of God the Father. We are accustomed to all this, but really it is terrible. A pure child, open to good and truth, asks us what the world is, what its law is, and instead of teaching him the love and

truth which we have believed, we carefully stuff his head with all sorts of dreadful, absurd lies and horrors, ascribing them all to God. This is awful. It is a crime that nothing can surpass. And we, and you with your Church, do all this. Forgive me.

FATHER VASILY.

Yes, if you look at Christ's teaching in that way — rationally, so to speak — then it is so.

NICHOLAS.

It is the same, no matter in what way you look at it.

(*Silence. The* PRIEST *takes leave of him. Enter* ALEXANDRA IVANOVNA.)

ALEXANDRA.

Good-bye, Father Vasily. Do not listen to him; he will lead you astray.

FATHER VASILY.

Oh no! One must put the Gospel to the test. It is too important a matter to be neglected, isn't it?

(*Exit.*)

ALEXANDRA.

Really, Nicholas, you have no pity on him. Though he is a priest, he is little more than a

boy. He cannot have settled convictions; he cannot be steadfast. . . .

NICHOLAS.

Are we to let him become confirmed in them, to harden in deceit? Why should we? Ah, he is a good, sincere man.

ALEXANDRA.

Well, what would happen to him were he to believe you?

NICHOLAS.

It is not a question of believing me; but if he could see the truth it would be well for him and for every one.

ALEXANDRA.

If it were really well, all would believe you. As it is, we see just the contrary. No one believes you — your wife least of all. She cannot believe you.

NICHOLAS.

Who told you so?

ALEXANDRA.

Well, explain all this to Masha. She never understood and never will, and no one in the world ever will, understand why you should take care of strangers and neglect your own children. Explain that to Masha.

NICHOLAS.

Masha is sure to understand. Forgive me, Aline, but if it were not for outside influences, to which she is so susceptible, she would understand me and go hand-in-hand with me.

ALEXANDRA.

To deprive her own children for the drunken Ephim and Co.? Never. As for your being angry with me, you will excuse me, but I cannot help speaking. . . .

NICHOLAS.

I am not angry. On the contrary, I am very glad that you said all you had to say, and gave me the opportunity of giving all my own views. I thought it over on my way to-day, and I am going to tell her at once, and you will see that she will agree, for she is both wise and good.

ALEXANDRA.

You will allow me to have my doubts.

NICHOLAS.

Well, I have none. This is no invention of mine: it is what we all know, and what Christ revealed to us.

ALEXANDRA.

You think He revealed *this?* I think He revealed something quite different.

NICHOLAS.

There can be nothing different. Just listen. Do not argue; listen to me.

ALEXANDRA.

I am listening.

NICHOLAS.

You admit that at any minute we may die and return to nothingness or to God, who demands that we should live according to His will.

ALEXANDRA.

Well?

NICHOLAS.

Well, what else am I to do in this life but that which the highest Judge that is in my soul — my conscience, God — demands? My conscience, God, demands that I should consider all men equal, should love and serve all.

ALEXANDRA.

Your children among the rest.

NICHOLAS.

Of course; but I must do everything my conscience dictates. The most important thing of all is to recognise that my life does not belong to me, nor yours to you, but to God, who sent us and requires us to live according to His will. And His will . . .

ALEXANDRA.

And you will convince Masha of this?

NICHOLAS.

Certainly.

ALEXANDRA.

She will cease to educate her children as she should and will desert them? Never.

NICHOLAS.

Not only she; you too will understand that that is the only thing to do.

ALEXANDRA.

Never!

(*Enter* MARIE IVANOVNA.)

NICHOLAS.

Well, Masha, I hope I did not wake you up this morning.

MARIE.

No, I was not asleep. Did you have a pleasant journey?

NICHOLAS.

Yes, very pleasant.

MARIE.

Why are you drinking that cold tea? Anyhow, we must have some fresh made for our guests. You know that Princess Cheremshanova is coming with her son and daughter.

NICHOLAS.

If you are pleased, so am I.

MARIE.

Yes. I am very fond of her and of her children, but it is hardly the moment for visitors.

ALEXANDRA.

Well, have a talk with him, and I will go and watch the game.

(*A silence, after which* MARIE IVANOVNA *and* NICHOLAS IVANOVICH *both speak at once.*)

Together.

MARIE.

It is hardly the moment, because we must talk things over.

NICHOLAS.

I was just telling Aline. . . .

MARIE.

What?

NICHOLAS.

No; you speak.

MARIE.

Well, I wanted to talk to you about Stephen. Something must be decided. The poor boy is in

suspense, does not know what is going to happen, and comes to me; but how can I decide?

NICHOLAS.

How can any one decide? He can decide for himself.

MARIE.

Why, you know he wants to enter the Guards as a volunteer, and he cannot do it without a certificate from you, and he must have money, and you give him nothing (*agitated.*)

NICHOLAS.

Masha, for heaven's sake do not get agitated, and listen to me. I neither give nor refuse. To enter the military service voluntarily I consider foolish madness, such as only a savage is capable of. If he does not understand the meanness, the baseness of such an action, or if he does it out of self-interest —

MARIE.

Oh, everything seems mad and foolish to you now. He wants to live — *you* have lived.

NICHOLAS.

(*hotly.*) I lived without understanding, with no one to tell me. But it depends on him now — not on me.

MARIE.

But it does depend on you, when you give him no money.

NICHOLAS.

I cannot give what does not belong to me.

MARIE.

What do you mean by "does not belong to me"?

NICHOLAS.

The labour of others does not belong to me. To give him money, I must take from others. I have no right to; I cannot. So long as I am the master of the estate I cannot dispose of it otherwise than as my conscience dictates. I cannot spend the labour of peasants, which costs them their whole strength, on the drinking-bouts of a hussar. Take the estate from me; then I shall not be responsible.

MARIE.

You know I do not want that, and I cannot do it. I have to educate the children, to nurse them, to bring them into the world. It is cruel.

NICHOLAS.

Dearest Masha, that is not the point. When you began to speak, I began also, and I wanted so

to talk frankly to you. All this is impossible. We live together, and do not understand each other; sometimes it seems as though we misunderstood each other on purpose.

MARIE.

I want to understand you, but I cannot. I cannot understand what has come over you.

NICHOLAS.

Then try to understand now. It is hardly the moment, but heaven knows when there will be a moment. Try to understand not only me, but yourself and your own life. We cannot go on living without knowing what we live for.

MARIE.

We lived so before, and we lived very well (*noting an expression of displeasure on his face.*) — All right; I am listening.

NICHOLAS.

I used to live thus, thus — that is to say, without thinking why I lived; but the time came when I was aghast. We live on the labour of others, we make others work for us, we bring children into the world, and educate them for the same thing. Old age, death, will come, and I shall

ask myself: "What did I live for? To produce parasites like myself?" Besides, this life is not even amusing. It is only tolerable when one is overflowing with the energy of life, like Vania.

MARIE.

Every one lives like that.

NICHOLAS.

And every one is unhappy.

MARIE.

Not at all.

NICHOLAS.

I, at least, discovered that I was terribly unhappy, and that I was causing you and the children to be unhappy, and I asked myself: "Is it possible that God created you for this?" And directly I thought that, I felt that the answer was "No." Then I asked myself: "What *did* God create us for?"

(*A footman enters.* MARIE IVANOVNA *does not listen to her husband, but speaks to the footman.*)

MARIE.

Bring some hot milk.

NICHOLAS.

I found the answer in the Gospel: we do not live for ourselves at all. It was revealed to me clearly once when I was thinking over the parable of the labourers in the vineyard. Do you remember it?

MARIE.

Yes; I know the labourers.

NICHOLAS.

Somehow or other that parable showed me my mistake more clearly than anything. I had believed that my life was my own just as those labourers believed that the vineyard was theirs, and everything was terrible to me. But as soon as I realised that my life was not my own, that I was sent into the world to do the work of God —

MARIE.

What of that? We all know that.

NICHOLAS.

Well, if we know it, we cannot continue to live as we do, when we know our whole life is not a fulfilment of this will, but, on the contrary, is in perpetual contradiction to it.

MARIE.

In what way is it a contradiction when we do no harm to any one?

NICHOLAS.

How can you say we do no harm to any one? That is exactly the conception of life that the labourers in the vineyard had. We —

MARIE.

Oh, yes; I know the parable. Well, what of it? He gave them all the same portion.

NICHOLAS.

(*after a silence.*) No; that is not it. But think of this, Masha; we have only one life, and it is in our power to live it devoutly or to ruin it.

MARIE.

I cannot think and discuss. I get no sleep at night; I am nursing baby. I manage the whole household, and instead of helping me you keep on telling me things I do not understand.

NICHOLAS.

Masha!

MARIE.

And now these visitors are arriving.

NICHOLAS.

But we will talk it out to the end, shall we not? (*He kisses her.*) Yes?

MARIE.

Yes. But do be your former self.

NICHOLAS.

That I cannot. But listen to me —

(*The sound of approaching carriage bells and wheels is heard.*)

MARIE.

There is no time now — they have arrived. I must go to them.

(*Disappears round the corner of the house, followed by* STEPHEN *and* LUBA. ALEXANDRA IVANOVNA *and her husband and* LISA *come on to the veranda.* NICHOLAS IVANOVICH *walks about in deep thought.*)

VANIA.

(*jumping over a bench.*) I don't give in; we'll finish the game! Well, Luba?

LUBA.

(*seriously.*) No nonsense, please!

ALEXANDRA.

Well, have you convinced her?

NICHOLAS.

Aline, what is going on between us now is serious, and jokes are quite out of place. It is not I who am convincing her, but life, truth, God. Therefore she cannot help being convinced — if not to-day, then to-morrow; if not to-morrow — The worst of it all is that no one ever has time. Who has come?

PETER.

The Cheremshanovs — Katia Cheremshanova, whom I have not seen for eighteen years. The last time we met we sang together: "La ei darem la mano." (*He sings.*)

ALEXANDRA.

(*to her husband.*) Please do not interfere, and do not imagine that I have quarrelled with Nicholas. I am speaking the truth. (*To* NICHOLAS.) I was not joking in the least, but it seemed so strange that you wanted to convince Masha at the very moment when she wanted to talk matters over with you.

NICHOLAS.

Very well, very well. Here they are. Please tell Masha that I am in my room. (*Exit.*)

ACT II

SCENE I

Same place in the country. Time: One week later.

(*Scene represents large drawing-room. Table is laid with samovar, tea and coffee. Piano against the wall, music-rack.*

MARIE IVANOVNA, *the* PRINCESS, *and* PETER SEMENOVICH *are seated at the table.*)

PETER.

Yes, Princess. It does not seem so long ago that you used to sing *Rosine,* and I . . . Whereas now I should not even do for a Don Basilio.

PRINCESS.

Now the children might sing, but times have altered.

PETER.

Yes, they are positivists. But I hear your daughter is a very serious and excellent musician. Are they still asleep?

MARIE.

Yes, they went out riding by moonlight and returned very late. I was nursing baby and heard them.

PETER.

And when does my better half return? Have you sent the carriage for her?

MARIE.

Yes, it went a long time ago. She ought to be here soon.

PRINCESS.

Did Alexandra Ivanovna really go with the sole purpose of fetching Father Gerasim?

MARIE.

Yes, the thought suddenly struck her yesterday, and she flew off at once.

PRINCESS.

What energy! I admire it.

PETER.

Oh, as to that, it never fails us. (*Takes out a cigar.*) Well, I think I'll take a turn in the park with the dogs and smoke while the young people are getting up.

PRINCESS.

I don't know, dear Marie Ivanovna, but I really think you take it too much to heart. I understand him. He is full of such high aspiration. What does it matter if he does give his property away to the poor? It's only too true that we all think too much of ourselves.

MARIE.

Oh, if it were only that. But you don't know him — you do not know all. It is not only helping the poor. It is a complete change — the utter wrecking of everything.

PRINCESS.

I certainly do not wish to intrude into your family life, but if you would allow me . . .

MARIE.

But I look on you as one of the family, especially now.

PRINCESS.

I should just advise you to put your demands plainly before him, and openly come to some agreement with him as to the limits —

MARIE.

(*agitated.*) There are no limits! He wishes to

give everything away. He wants me at my age to become a cook — a laundress.

PRINCESS.

Oh, impossible! How extraordinary!

MARIE.

(*taking out a letter.*) Now we are quite alone; I should like to tell you everything. Yesterday he wrote me this letter. I will read it to you.

PRINCESS.

What! living in the same house with you, he writes you letters? How strange!

MARIE.

Oh, no. I quite understand. He gets so excited when he talks I have been feeling anxious about his health lately.

PRINCESS.

Well, what does he write?

MARIE.

Listen. (*She reads.*) "You reproach me for destroying our former life without offering you anything else or saying how I intend to provide for my family. When we begin to talk we both get excited, so I am writing instead. I have told

you many times why I can't go on living as I have done. And as for trying to convince you that it is wrong to live as we have been accustomed to do, that we must lead a Christian life, I cannot do that in a letter. You can do one of two things — either believe in truth and liberty and go with me, or believe in me, give yourself trustfully to me, and follow me." (*Stops reading.*) But I can do neither of these things! I do not believe that I ought to live as he desires, and moreover I love the children and I cannot trust him. (*Continues to read.*) "My plan is this. We will give all our land to the peasants, leaving ourselves fifty acres and the kitchen garden and the flooded meadow. We will try to work, but we will not force ourselves or our children to work. What we reserve for ourselves will bring in about five hundred roubles * a year."

PRINCESS.

It is impossible to live on five hundred roubles a year with seven children.

MARIE.

Well, and then he goes on to say that we will give up our house for a school and live in the gardener's cottage, in two rooms.

* A rouble = about 2s.

PRINCESS.

Yes, I really begin to think that he's not well. What have you answered?

MARIE.

I told him I could not agree to it. That, were I alone, I would follow him anywhere. But with the children . . . Just think—I am nursing little Nicholas. I told him it was impossible to break up everything like that. Was this what I married him for? I am already old and feeble. It is not an easy matter to bring nine children into the world and nurse them.

PRINCESS.

I never dreamt it had gone so far!

MARIE.

Well, that is how matters stand, and I can't imagine what will become of us. Yesterday he remitted the entire rent of the peasants from Dmitrovka, and he intends to give that land to them outright.

PRINCESS.

I really think you ought not to permit that. It is our duty to protect our children. If he cannot own his estate himself, let him give it to you.

MARIE.

I don't want it.

PRINCESS.

But it is your duty to retain it, for the sake of your children. Let him make it over to you.

MARIE.

My sister suggested that to him, but he said he had no right to dispose of it, as the land belonged to those who tilled it, and it was his duty to give it to the peasants.

PRINCESS.

Yes, I see it is really much more serious than I thought.

MARIE.

And fancy! our priest is on his side.

PRINCESS.

I noticed that yesterday.

MARIE.

Now my sister has gone to Moscow to consult a lawyer, and above all to bring Father Gerasim back with her to see if he has any influence with him.

PRINCESS.

I do not think that Christianity consists in ruining one's own family.

MARIE.

But he will not trust Father Gerasim. He is too far confirmed in his convictions, and you know when he talks I can find no arguments to use against him. The worst of it is — I believe he is right.

PRINCESS.

That is only because you love him.

MARIE.

I do not know why, but it is dreadful, dreadful. Everything remains unsettled. That's what religion does!

(*Enter* NURSE.)

NURSE.

Please, ma'am, the baby is awake and wants you.

MARIE.

I will come in a moment. I am worried, and the baby has colic, you see. I am coming.

(*Exit* PRINCESS.)

(*From the other side enters* NICHOLAS *with a paper in his hand.*)

NICHOLAS.

It is incredible!

MARIE.

What is the matter?

NICHOLAS.

The matter is just this, that for a pine tree of ours, Peter is to go to jail.

MARIE.

But why?

NICHOLAS.

Because he felled it. They took the matter to court, and he is sentenced to a month's imprisonment. His wife came to implore me —

MARIE.

Well, can't you help her?

NICHOLAS.

I cannot now. The only thing to do is not to own any forest; and I will not! I will just go and see if I can help in the trouble of which I myself have been the cause.

(*Enter* LUBA *and* BORIS.)

LUBA.

Good morning, father. (*Kisses him.*) Where are you going?

NICHOLAS.

I have just come from the village and I'm now on my way back. A hungry man is being put in jail for —

LUBA.

It's probably Peter.

NICHOLAS.

Yes — Peter.

(*Exeunt* NICHOLAS *and* MARIE IVANOVNA.)

LUBA.

(*sitting down before the samovar.*) Will you take coffee or tea?

BORIS.

I do not care.

LUBA.

Things are just as they were. I cannot see how it will end.

BORIS.

I do not quite understand him. I know the peasants are poor and ignorant, that it's our duty to help them. But not by showing favour to thieves.

LUBA.

But how?

BORIS.

By everything we do. We must dedicate all our knowledge to them, but we cannot give up our life.

LUBA.

Father says that is just what we must do.

BORIS.

I do not see why. It is quite possible to help the people without ruining one's own life, and that is what I intend doing myself. If only you —

LUBA.

Your wishes are mine. And I am not afraid of anything.

BORIS.

But what about your ear-rings, and your dress?

LUBA.

The ear-rings we can sell, and as for the frock, I might dress differently without being altogether ugly.

BORIS.

I want to have another talk with him. Do you think I should be in his way if I went to the village?

LUBA.

I'm sure you wouldn't. I can see he is very fond of you. Yesterday he talked to you nearly all the time.

BORIS.

Then I'll go.

LUBA.

Yes, do. And I'll go and wake up Lisa and Tonia.

(*Exit on different sides.*)

SCENE II

Village street. The peasant IVAN ZIABREV *is lying on the ground at a cottage door, with a sheepskin coat over him.*

IVAN.

Malashka!

(*From behind the cottage comes a little girl with a baby in her arms. The baby cries.*)

I want a drink of water.

(MALASHKA *goes into the cottage. The baby is heard crying still. She brings a jug of water.*)

Why do you hit the baby and make him howl? I'll tell your mother.

MALASHKA.

Do tell mother! Baby's howling because he's hungry.

IVAN.

(*drinking.*) Why don't you go and get some milk at Demkin's?

MALASHKA.

I have been. They haven't got any, and there was not a soul at home.

IVAN.

Oh, I wish Death would come quicker. Has the dinner bell rung?

MALASHKA.

(*screaming at the top of her voice.*) Yes, it has rung! There's the master coming!

(*Enter* NICHOLAS.)

NICHOLAS.

Why are you lying out here?

IVAN.

There are flies there. And it's too hot.

NICHOLAS.

Have you got warm then?

IVAN.

I feel as if I were on fire now.

NICHOLAS.

Where is Peter? At home?

IVAN.

How could he be, at this hour? He's gone to the fields to bring in the sheaves.

NICHOLAS.

I was told he had been arrested.

IVAN.

That's quite true. The policeman has gone to the field after him.

(*Enter a pregnant* WOMAN, *with a sheaf of oats and a pitchfork, and immediately hits* MALASHKA *over the head.*)

WOMAN.

Why did you go away from the baby? Do listen to him screaming. You only think of running out in the road.

MALASHKA.

(*crying loudly.*) I just came out to give father a drink of water.

WOMAN.

I'll give it you. (*Sees* NICHOLAS IVANOVICH.) Good-day, Nicholas Ivanovich. You see what they are all bringing me to! There's no one but me to do anything, and I'm worn out. Now they're taking our very last man to jail, and this lazy lout is lying about doing nothing.

NICHOLAS.

Why do you say that? You can see he is ill.

WOMAN.

Ill, indeed. What about me? When there's

work to be done then he's sick, but if he wants to go on the spree and knock me about, he's well enough. Let him die like a dog. I don't care.

NICHOLAS.

How sinful to talk like that!

WOMAN.

I know it's a sin. But my temper gets the better of me. Look how I am, and I have to work for two. All the others have got their oats in, and a quarter of our field isn't cut yet. I ought not to have stopped, but I had to come home and see after the children.

NICHOLAS.

I will have your oats cut for you and will send some binders out to your field.

WOMAN.

Oh, I can manage the binding myself, if we can only get it cut. Oh, Nicholas Ivanovich, do you think he's going to die? He's very low indeed.

NICHOLAS.

I'm sure I don't know; but he's certainly very weak. I think he had better be taken to the hospital.

WOMAN.

Oh, my God! (*Begins to weep loudly.*)

Don't take him away. Let him die here. (*To the husband.*) What did you say?

IVAN.

I want to go to hospital. I'm lying here worse than a dog.

WOMAN.

Oh, I don't know what to do! I shall go mad! Malashka, get dinner!

NICHOLAS.

And what have you got for dinner?

WOMAN.

Some potatoes and bread. That's all we've got. (*Goes into cottage, the sounds of a pig squealing and children crying are heard.*)

IVAN.

(*groaning.*) Oh, God, if Death would come!

(*Enter* BORIS.)

BORIS.

Can't I be of any use here!

NICHOLAS.

No one can be of any use here. The evil is too deeply rooted. We can only be of use to ourselves by realising on what foundations we build our happiness. Here is a family — five chil-

dren — the wife pregnant, the husband ill, and nothing in the house to eat but potatoes. And at this moment it is a question whether they will have food for next year. And there is no help for them. How can one help? I am going to hire a man to work for them. But who will that man be? A man as badly off as they are, who has given up tilling his own land through drunkenness or poverty.

BORIS.

Excuse me, but if that is the case, why are you here?

NICHOLAS.

I am trying to ascertain my own position; to know who looks after our gardens, builds our houses, makes our clothes, feeds and dresses us.

(PEASANTS *with scythes and* WOMEN *with pitchforks pass them. They bow to the master.*)

NICHOLAS.

(*stopping one of them.*) Ephraim, can you take the job of cutting Ivan's oats for him?

EPHRAIM.

(*shaking his head.*) I'd do it gladly, but I can't. I haven't got my own in yet. I'm just hurrying off to do it now. Why? Is Ivan dying?

ANOTHER PEASANT.

There's old Sebastian. Maybe he can take the job. Sebastian! They want a man to reap.

SEBASTIAN.

Take the job yourself if you want it. One day may mean the whole year in such weather as this.

NICHOLAS.

(*to* BORIS.) All those men are half-starved, many of them ill or old, living on bread and water. Look at that old man. He suffers from rupture — and he works from four in the morning till ten at night, and is barely alive. And we — now, is it possible, when we once understand this, to go on living quietly and calling ourselves Christians? Can we call ourselves anything short of beasts?

BORIS.

But what are we to do?

NICHOLAS.

Not be a party to evil. Not possess land. Not feed upon their toil. How this can be managed I do not know. The thing is — at least so it was with me. I lived and did not understand what sort of life I led. I didn't understand that I was a son of God and that we were all sons of

God and all brothers. But when I came to understand that, when I saw that all had equal claims on life, my whole life was changed. I cannot explain it very well to you, I can only say that before, I was blind, just as my family still are, but now my eyes are opened I cannot help seeing. And, seeing, I cannot go on living as before. But, of course, for the present we must do as best we can.

(*Enter* POLICE-SERGEANT, *with* PETER, *and his wife and a boy.*)

PETER.

(*falling on his knees before* NICHOLAS IVANOVICH.) Forgive me, for Christ's sake. I'm done for! My wife can't get along alone. Can't you let me go on bail?

NICHOLAS.

I will see about it. I will write. (*To the* POLICE-SERGEANT.) Couldn't you let him stay here meanwhile?

SERGEANT.

I have orders to take him to the police-station.

NICHOLAS.

Go then; I will hire a labourer. I will do all that is possible. This is my fault. How can one live like this?

(*Exit.*)

SCENE III

Same as SCENE I. *It is raining outside. Drawing-room with a piano.* TONIA *has just finished playing the Schumann Sonata, and is still sitting at the piano. Stephen stands near the piano. After the music,* LUBA, LISA, ANNA IVANOVNA, MITROFAN DMITRICH *and the Priest are all greatly moved.*

LUBA.

The Andante is so lovely.

STEPHEN.

No — the Scherzo! But the whole thing is charming.

LISA.

Beautiful!

STEPHEN.

(*to* TONIA.) I had no idea you were such an artist. Your rendering is masterly. Difficulties do not seem to exist for you, you only think of the expression, and it is so exquisitely delicate.

LUBA.

So noble, too!

TONIA.

I feel it is not what I want it to be. There's a great deal lacking in my playing.

LISA.

It could not be better. It is marvellous.

LUBA.

Schumann is very great. But I think Chopin appeals to the heart more.

STEPHEN.

He is more lyrical.

TONIA.

I do not think a comparison is possible.

LUBA.

Do you remember that Prelude of his?

TONIA.

Do you mean the so-called George Sand one?

(*Begins to play.*)

LUBA.

No, not that one. That is lovely, but it is hackneyed. Please play this one.

(TONIA *tries to play, but breaks off and stops.*)

LUBA.

No, the one in D minor.

TONIA.

Oh, this one. It is wonderful. It is like chaos before the Creation.

STEPHEN.

(*laughs.*) Yes, yes! Do play it. No, better not — you are tired. We have already had a wonderful morning, thanks to you.

(TONIA *rises and looks out of the window.*)

TONIA.

There are the peasants again.

LUBA.

That's what is so precious in music. I understand Saul. I'm not tormented by the devil, but I know how Saul felt. There's no art that can make one forget everything like music.

TONIA.

And yet you are going to marry a man who doesn't understand music.

LUBA.

Oh, but — Boris does understand it.

BORIS.

(*absent-minded.*) Music! — Yes, I like music. But it isn't important. And I am rather sorry

for the life that people lead who attach so much importance to it.

(*There are sweets on the table and they all eat.*)

LUBA.

How nice to be engaged! Then one always has sweets.

BORIS.

Oh, it is not I — it's mother.

TONIA.

Very nice of her. (*Goes to the window.*) Whom do you want to see? The peasants have come to see Nicholas Ivanovich.

LUBA.

(*going to the window.*) He is not at home. Wait.

TONIA.

And what about poetry?

LUBA.

No, the value of music is that it takes hold of you, and carries you away from reality. We were all so gloomy just now, and when you began to play, everything brightened. It did really. Take the waltzes of Chopin. They're hackneyed, of course, but —

TONIA.

This one? (*She plays.*)

SCENE IV

(*Enter* NICHOLAS. *He greets* TONIA, LUBA, STEPHEN, *and* LISA.)

NICHOLAS.

(*to* LUBA.) Where's Mother?

LUBA.

I think she is in the nursery. Father, how wonderfully Tonia plays. Where have you been?

NICHOLAS.

In the village.

(STEPHEN *calls the footman, who enters.*)

STEPHEN.

Bring another samovar.

NICHOLAS.

(*shakes hands with footman.*) Good morning!

(*Footman confused. Exit. Exit also* NICHOLAS.)

STEPHEN.

Poor chap! He's so embarrassed. He doesn't understand. It's as if we were all guilty somehow.

NICHOLAS.

(*re-enters.*) I was going to my room without telling you what I felt. I think it was wrong of me. (*To* TONIA.) If you, who are our guest, are hurt by what I am going to say, please forgive me, as I must speak. You said just now, Luba, that Tonia played well. Here you are, seven or eight healthy young men and women. You slept till ten o'clock. Then you had food and drink, and you are still eating, and you play and discuss music. And there, where I have just come from, the people are up at three in the morning. Some have not slept at all, having watched the cattle all night, and all of them, even the old, the sick, and the children, and the women with babies at the breast and those who are about to have children, work with their utmost strength, that we may enjoy the fruits of their labour. And as if that were not enough, one of them, the only worker in the family, is just now being dragged to prison because in the spring he cut down a pine-tree in the forest which is called mine — one of the hundred thousand that grow there. Here we are, washed and dressed, having left all our uncleanness in the bedrooms for slaves to carry away. Eating, drinking, or discussing, which touches us more — Schumann or Chopin — and which of them drives away our *ennui* the more effectually.

That is what I thought on seeing you all just now, and so tell you. Just think whether it is possible to go on like that! (*Standing in great agitation.*)

LISA.

It is true — quite true.

LUBA.

Thinking as you do, life is impossible.

STEPHEN.

Why is it impossible? I don't see why we shouldn't talk about Schumann even though the peasants are poor. The one doesn't exclude the other. If men —

NICHOLAS.

(*angrily.*) If a man has no heart and is made of wood —

STEPHEN.

Well, I will be silent.

TONIA.

This problem is terrible. And it is the problem of our time. We must not be afraid of it. We must look reality in the face in order to solve it.

NICHOLAS.

There is no time to wait for the problem to be solved by concerted action. Each of us may die to-day or to-morrow. How am I to live without suffering from this inner conflict.

BORIS.

Of course the only way is not to share in the evil.

NICHOLAS.

Well, forgive me if I have hurt you. I could not help saying what I felt. (*Exit.*)

STEPHEN.

How could we avoid sharing in it? Our whole life is bound up with it.

BORIS.

That is exactly why he says that in the first place one ought not to possess property, and one's whole life should be so altered that one may serve others, and not be served by them.

TONIA.

Oh, I see you are quite on Nicholas Ivanovich's side.

BORIS.

Yes, I begin to understand for the first time; and, besides, all I saw in the village. We have only to take off the spectacles through which we are accustomed to view the life of the peasants, to see how their misery is connected with our pleasures, and there you are.

MITROFAN.

But the remedy is not to ruin our own lives.

STEPHEN.

Isn't it extraordinary how Mitrofan Ermilovich and I, standing at opposite poles, agree on some points? Those are my exact words: not to ruin our own lives.

BORIS.

It's perfectly simple. You both want a pleasant life, and so you want to adopt a plan of living that will ensure it. You (*turning to* STEPHEN) would like to preserve present conditions, and Mitrofan Ermilovich wants new ones.

(LUBA *speaks under her breath to* TONIA. TONIA *goes to the piano and plays a Chopin Nocturne. All are silent.*)

STEPHEN.

That is beautiful. That solves all problems.

BORIS.

It only obscures them, and delays their solution.

(*During the music enter silently* MARIE IVANOVNA *and the* PRINCESS. *They sit down and listen. Before the end of the Nocturne carriage bells are heard.*)

LUBA.

Oh, that is Auntie!

(*Goes to meet her. Music continues. Enter* ALEXANDRA IVANOVNA *and a lawyer and* FATHER GERASIM *with his pectoral cross. All present rise.*)

FATHER GERASIM.

Pray continue. It is very pleasant.

(*The* PRINCESS *and* FATHER VASILY *go up to him and ask his blessing.*)

ALEXANDRA.

I have done what I said I would. I found Father Gerasim and persuaded him to come with me. He is going to Kursk. So I have done my part. And here is the lawyer. He has the papers all ready to sign.

MARIE.

Would you not like to have some luncheon?

(*The Lawyer lays his papers on the table and goes.*)

I am very grateful to Father Gerasim.

FATHER GERASIM.

What else could I do? It was not on my way, but my Christian duty bade me come.

(PRINCESS *whispers to the young people. They all talk among themselves, and go out on the veranda, except* BORIS. FATHER VASILY *rises to go.*)

FATHER GERASIM.

Stay with us. You as a spiritual father, and the pastor here, may derive some benefit and be of use. Stay, if Marie Ivanovna does not object.

MARIE.

Oh, no. Father Vasily is like one of the family to me. I consulted him as well, but being young, he lacks authority.

FATHER GERASIM.

Undoubtedly, undoubtedly.

ALEXANDRA.

(*approaching him.*) Now, you see, Father Gerasim, you are the only one that can help us and persuade him to see reason. He is a clever man and a learned man; but you know yourself, learning can only do harm. He does not see clearly somehow. He persists in saying that the Christian command is to have no possessions. But is that possible?

FATHER GERASIM.

It is all a snare, intellectual pride, self-will. The fathers of the Church have settled that question adequately. But how did it all come about?

MARIE.

To be quite frank with you, I must say that when we married he was indifferent to religious questions, and we lived the first twenty years of our life happily. Then he began to think about these things. His sister may, perhaps, have influenced him, or his reading. But at any rate he began to think, to read the Gospel, and then all at once he became very pious, going to church, visiting monks, and then he suddenly stopped all that, and changed his life completely. Now he does everything for himself, he permits none of the servants to do anything for him, and, worst of all, he is giving away all his property.

Yesterday he gave away his forest and the land attached to it. I am afraid. I have seven children. Do talk to him. I'll go and ask whether he will see you. (*Exit.*)

FATHER GERASIM.

Yes, nowadays, many are leaving the Church. What about the property? Does it belong to him or his wife?

ALEXANDRA.

It is his own. That is the worst of it.

FATHER GERASIM.

And what is his rank.

PRINCESS.

Not a high one. I think he is a captain. He has been in the army.

FATHER GERASIM.

Many are leaving the Church nowadays. In Odessa there was a lady who became infatuated with spiritualism, and she began to do a lot of harm. But finally God prevailed, and brought her again within the Church.

PRINCESS.

Now, father, you must understand. My son is going to marry their daughter. I have given

my consent. But the girl is used to a life of luxury, and she must have means of her own so that the entire burden may not fall upon my son. I must say he works hard, and he is a remarkable young man.

(*Enter* MARIE IVANOVNA *and* NICHOLAS IVANOVICH.)

NICHOLAS.

How do you do, Princess? How do you do? Pardon me — I do not know your name. (*To* FATHER GERASIM.)

FATHER GERASIM.

Do you not wish for a blessing?

NICHOLAS.

No, I do not.

FATHER GERASIM.

I am Gerasim Feodorovich. Pleased to meet you.

(*Footman brings refreshments and wine.*)

It is fine weather, and very favourable for harvesting.

NICHOLAS.

I understand you have come on the invitation of Alexandra Ivanovna to convince me of my

errors, and to lead me into the right way. If that is the case, do not let us beat about the bush. Let us come to the point. I do not deny that I disagree with the teaching of the Church. I used to believe in it, but I have ceased to do so. Nevertheless, I long with my whole soul to be in harmony with the truth, and if you can show it to me, I will accept it without hesitation.

FATHER GERASIM.

How can you say you do not believe the teaching of the Church? What are we to believe if not the Church?

NICHOLAS.

God, and his law, given to us in the Gospel.

FATHER GERASIM.

The Church instructs us in that very law.

NICHOLAS.

If that were so, I would believe the Church. But the Church teaches the very opposite.

FATHER GERASIM.

The Church cannot teach the opposite, for it is founded by our Lord. It is said, "I give you the power, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it."

NICHOLAS.

That refers to something quite different. But, supposing that Christ did found a church. How do I know that it is *your* Church?

FATHER GERASIM.

Because it is said, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name —"

NICHOLAS.

That does not apply either, and does not prove anything.

FATHER GERASIM.

How can you renounce the Church, when the Church alone possesses grace?

NICHOLAS.

I did not renounce the Church until I was wholly convinced that it supports all that is contrary to Christianity.

FATHER GERASIM.

The Church cannot err, because she alone possesses the truth. Those err who leave her. The Church is sacred.

NICHOLAS.

But I have told you I do not admit that, because the Gospel says, "Ye shall know them by

their fruits." And I perceive that the Church gives her sanction to oath-taking and murder and executions.

FATHER GERASIM.

The Church admits and consecrates the powers instituted by God.

(*During the conversation enter one by one* LUBA, LISA, STEPHEN, TONIA, *and* BORIS, *who sit or stand and listen.*)

NICHOLAS.

I know that not only killing but anger is forbidden by the Gospel. And the Church gives its blessing to the army. The Gospel says, "Do not swear," and the Church administers oaths. The Gospel says —

FATHER GERASIM.

Excuse me — when Pilate said, "I ask you in the name of the living God," Christ accepted the oath, and said, "Yes, that I am."

NICHOLAS.

Oh, what are you saying? That is simply ridiculous!

FATHER GERASIM.

That is why the Church does not permit individuals to interpret the Gospel. She would

preserve men from error, and she cares for them as a mother for her children. She gives them an interpretation befitting the powers of their mind. No! Allow me to finish. The Church does not give her children a burden heavier than they can bear. She requires only that they fulfil the commandments. Love, do not kill, do not steal, do not commit adultery.

NICHOLAS.

Yes. Do not kill me, do not steal from me what I have stolen. We have all robbed the people, have stolen their land, and then we instituted the law against stealing. And the Church sanctions it all.

FATHER GERASIM.

That is all a snare, mere spiritual pride speaking in you. You want to show off your intellect.

NICHOLAS.

Not at all! I merely ask you, how, according to the law of Christ, am I to behave now, when I have recognised the sin of robbing the people and appropriating their land! What must I do? Go on holding my land, exploiting the labour of the starving peasants, just for *this?* (*He points to the servant who is bringing in lunch and wine.*) Or am I to give back the land to those who have been robbed by my ancestors?

FATHER GERASIM.

You must act as a son of the Church should act. You have a family, children, and must bring them up as befits their station.

NICHOLAS.

Why must I?

FATHER GERASIM.

Because God has placed you in that station. And if you want to do charitable acts, then perform them by giving away part of your fortune, and by visiting the poor.

NICHOLAS.

Then why was it said that the rich man could not enter the kingdom of heaven?

FATHER GERASIM.

It was said, if he desired to be perfect.

NICHOLAS.

But I do want to be perfect. It is said in the Gospel, "Be ye perfect even as your Father in Heaven is perfect."

FATHER GERASIM.

But one must understand to what it applies.

NICHOLAS.

That is exactly what I am trying to understand, and all that was said in the Sermon on the Mount is simple and clear.

FATHER GERASIM.

It is all spiritual pride.

NICHOLAS.

Why pride, if it is said that what is hidden from the wise shall be revealed to babes?

FATHER GERASIM.

It will be revealed to the humble not to the proud.

NICHOLAS.

But who is proud? Is it I, who think that I am like the rest, and therefore must live like the rest, live by my labour, and in the same poverty as all my brothers, or is it they who consider themselves apart from the rest, as the priests who think they know the whole truth, and cannot err, and interpret the words of Christ to suit themselves?

FATHER GERASIM.

(*offended.*) I beg your pardon, Nicholas Ivanovich, I have not come to argue as to who is right.

I did not come to be lectured. I complied with the wish of Alexandra Ivanovna, and came to have a talk. But you appear to know everything better than I, so the conversation had better cease. But I beseech you for the last time, in the name of God, to reconsider the matter. You are terribly wrong, and will lose your own soul.

MARIE.

Won't you come and have something to eat?

FATHER GERASIM.

Thank you very much. (*Accepts.*)
(*Exit with* ANNA IVANOVNA.)

MARIE.

(*to* FATHER VASILY.) What is the result of your talk?

FATHER VASILY.

Well, my opinion is that Nicholas Ivanovich spoke truly, and Father Gerasim brought no arguments against what he said.

PRINCESS.

He was not allowed to speak. And then he did not like it. It became a sort of wordy tournament, with everybody listening. He withdrew out of modesty.

BORIS.

It was not at all from modesty. Everything he said was false, and he obviously had nothing more to say.

PRINCESS.

Oh, I see. With your usual fickleness you are beginning to agree with Nicholas Ivanovich. If those are your opinions you ought not to marry.

BORIS.

I only say that truth is truth. I cannot help saying it.

PRINCESS.

You are the last person who ought to speak like that.

BORIS.

Why?

PRINCESS.

Because you are poor, and have nothing to give away. However, the whole affair is no concern of ours. (*Exit.*)

(*After her all except* NICHOLAS *and* MARIE IVANOVNA *go out.*)

NICHOLAS.

(*sits deep in thought and smiles meditatively.*) Masha, what is all this about? Why did you

ask that miserable, misguided man to come here? Why should that noisy woman and this priest take part in the most intimate questions of our life? Couldn't we settle all our affairs between ourselves?

MARIE.

But what can I do if you wish to leave our children with nothing? I cannot sit still and let you do that. You know it is not greed — I do not want anything for myself.

NICHOLAS.

I know, I know. I trust you. But the misfortune is that you do not believe. I don't mean that you don't believe the truth. I know you see it; but you cannot bring yourself to trust it. You do not trust the truth, and you do not trust me. You would rather trust the crowd — the princess and the rest.

MARIE.

I trust you; I have always trusted you. But when you want to make our children beggars —

NICHOLAS.

That proves that you do not trust me. Do you imagine I have not struggled and have not had fears? But now I am perfectly convinced, not only that it can be done, but must be done, and that

this is the only right thing to do for the children. You always say that if it were not for the children you would follow me. And I say that if it were not for the children you might go on living as you do. We should only be injuring ourselves. As it is we injure them.

MARIE.

But what can I do if I don't understand?

NICHOLAS.

And I — what am I to do? I know why you sent for that poor creature dressed up in his cassock and his cross, and I know why Aline brought the lawyer. You want me to transfer the estate to your name. I cannot do that. You know I have loved you during the twenty years we have been married. I love you, and I have every wish for your welfare, and that is why I cannot sign that transfer. If I am to make over the estate, then it must be to those from whom it came — the peasants. I cannot give it to you. I must give it to them. I am glad the lawyer has come. I must do it.

MARIE.

This is dreadful! Why are you so cruel? If you think it a sin to hold property, give it to me. (*Weeps.*)

NICHOLAS.

You do not know what you are saying. If I gave it to you I could not go on living with you. I should have to go away. I cannot continue to live in these conditions, and see the peasants squeezed dry, whether it is in your name or mine. I cannot see them put in prison. So choose.

MARIE.

How cruel you are! This is not Christianity; it is wicked. I cannot live as you want me to do. I cannot take things from my children to give to strangers, and for that you would forsake me! Well, go. I see that you no longer love me, and, indeed, I know the reason.

NICHOLAS.

Very well, I will sign it. But, Masha, you are asking the impossible of me. (*Goes to the table and signs.*) It is you who desired that. I cannot live so. (*Rushes away holding his head.*)

MARIE.

(*calling.*) Luba! Aline! (*They enter.*) He has signed — and gone. What am I to do? He said he would go away, and he will. Go to him.

LUBA.

He is gone.

ACT III

SCENE I

Scene is laid in Moscow. Large room, and in it a carpenter's bench, a table with papers, a bookcase. Boards lean against and cover the mirror and the pictures. NICHOLAS IVANOVICH *is working at the bench; a carpenter is planing.*

NICHOLAS.

(*taking a finished board from the bench.*) Is that all right?

CARPENTER.

(*adjusts the plane.*) It's not up to much. Go at it! Don't be afraid. Like that.

NICHOLAS.

I wish I could, but I cannot manage it.

CARPENTER.

But why do you go in for carpentering, sir? There are so many in our trade now, you can't make a living at it.

NICHOLAS.

(*continues working.*) I am ashamed to live in idleness.

CARPENTER.

But that's your lot in life, sir. God has given you property.

NICHOLAS.

That is just the point. I do not believe God gave anything of the kind. Men have amassed goods that they have taken from their brothers.

CARPENTER.

(*wondering.*) That may all be very true. But still you need not work.

NICHOLAS.

I understand that it seems strange to you that in this house, where there is so much superfluity, I still wish to earn my living.

CARPENTER.

(*laughing.*) Well, that's just like you gentlemen. There's nothing you don't want to do. Now just smooth off that plank.

NICHOLAS.

Perhaps you will not believe me and will laugh at me when I say that I used to live that way and was not ashamed of it, but now that I believe the teaching of Christ that we are all brothers, I am ashamed to live that life.

CARPENTER.

If you are ashamed give away your property.

NICHOLAS.

I wanted to, but I did not succeed. I have handed it over to my wife.

A VOICE.

(*from outside.*) Father, may I come in?

NICHOLAS.

Of course you may! You may always come in.

(*Enter* LUBA.)

LUBA.

Good-morning, Yakov.

CARPENTER.

Good-morning, miss.

LUBA.

(*to her father.*) Boris has left for the regiment. I'm so afraid he will do or say something he ought not to. What do you think?

NICHOLAS.

What can I think? He will act according to his conscience.

LUBA.

But that's awful. He has only such a short time to serve now, and he may go and ruin his life.

NICHOLAS.

He did well in not coming to me. He knows I cannot tell him anything beyond what he knows himself. He told me himself that he asked for his discharge because he saw that there could not be a more lawless, cruel, brutal occupation than that which is based on murder. And that there is nothing more humiliating than to obey implicitly any man who happens to be his superior in rank. He knows all this.

LUBA.

That is precisely what I'm afraid of. He knows of all that and he'll be sure to do something.

NICHOLAS.

His conscience, that God within him, must decide that. If he had come to me I should have advised him only one thing, not to act on the dictates of reason, but only when his whole being demanded it. There's nothing worse than that. There was I, desiring to do Christ's bidding, which is to leave father, wife, children — and follow Him. And I was on the point of going.

And how did that end? It ended by my coming back and living in town, with you, in luxury. That was because I wanted to do something beyond my strength, and it ended in placing me in a stupid and humiliating position. I want to live simply — to work — and in these surroundings, with footmen and hall porters, it becomes a pose. There, I see Yakov Nikanorovich is laughing at me.

CARPENTER.

Why should I laugh? You pay me — you give me tea — I am very grateful to you.

LUBA.

Don't you think I had better go to him, father?

NICHOLAS.

My darling, I know how hard it is for you — how terrible! But you ought not to be frightened. I am a man who understands life. No harm can come of it. All that seems to you bad, really brings joy to the heart. You must understand that a man who chooses that path has had to make a choice. There are circumstances in which the scales balance evenly between God and the devil. And at that moment God's greatest work is being done. Any interference from without is very dangerous, and only brings suffering. It is as

though a man were making a great effort to bear down the scale, and the touch of a finger may break his back.

LUBA.

But why suffer?

NICHOLAS.

It is the same thing as though a mother should say, "Why suffer?" But a child cannot be born without pain. And so it is with spiritual birth. I can only say one thing — Boris is a true Christian, and therefore free. And if you cannot be like him, if you cannot believe God as he does, then believe God through him.

MARIE.

(*outside the door.*) May I come in?

NICHOLAS.

Certainly — always. Quite a meeting here today.

MARIE.

Our priest has come — Vasily Ermilovich. He is on his way to the bishop to resign his cure.

NICHOLAS.

Not really. Is he here? Luba, call him. He will certainly want to see me.

(*Exit* LUBA.)

MARIE.

I came to tell you about Vania. He is behaving so badly and will not study, and I am sure he will not pass. I have tried to talk to him but he is impertinent.

NICHOLAS.

Masha — you know I do not sympathise with your mode of life and your ideas of education. It is an awful question whether I have the right to look on and see my children ruined.

MARIE.

Then you must offer a definite substitute. What do you propose?

NICHOLAS.

I cannot say — I can only tell you that the first thing is to get rid of this corrupting luxury.

MARIE.

And make peasants of them! That I cannot agree to.

NICHOLAS.

Then do not ask me. All that upsets you now is inevitable.

(*Enter* FATHER VASILY *and embraces* NICHOLAS IVANOVICH.)

Then you have really done it!

FATHER VASILY.

I cannot go on any longer!

NICHOLAS.

I did not expect it would come so soon.

FATHER VASILY.

It had to come. In my vocation one cannot remain indifferent. I had to confess, to administer the sacrament; how could I, knowing it to be false!

NICHOLAS.

And what will happen now?

FATHER VASILY.

I am going to the bishop to be examined. I am afraid I shall be exiled to the Solavetsky Monastery. I thought at one time of running away and going abroad, of asking you to help me, but then I gave up the idea. It would be cowardly. The only thing is — my wife —

NICHOLAS.

Where is she?

FATHER VASILY.

She has gone to her father. My mother-in-law came and took away our son. That hurt. I wanted so much — (*He stops, hardly restraining his tears.*)

NICHOLAS.

Well, God help you. Are you staying here with us?

(*Enter* ALEXANDRA IVANOVNA *with a letter.*)

ALEXANDRA.

A special messenger has brought this for you, Nicholas Ivanovich. How do you do, Father Vasily?

FATHER VASILY.

I am no longer Father Vasily, Alexandra Ivanovna.

ALEXANDRA.

Really? Why?

FATHER VASILY.

I have discovered that we do not believe in the right way.

ALEXANDRA.

Oh dear, oh dear, how sinful! You are a good man, but what errors you do fall into. It is all Nicholas Ivanovich's doing.

FATHER VASILY.

Not Nicholas Ivanovich's, but Christ's.

ALEXANDRA.

Oh, stop, stop! Why leave the fold of the

Orthodox Church? I know you mean well, but you are ruining your own soul.

NICHOLAS.

(*to himself.*) I expected this. What am I to do?

ALEXANDRA.

What is it?

NICHOLAS.

(*reading.*) It is from the Princess. This is what she writes: "Boris has refused to serve and has been arrested. You have been his ruin. It is your duty to save him. He is at the Kroutitsk Barracks." Yes, I must go to him, if only they will let me see him. (*He takes off his apron, puts his coat on, and goes out.*) (*Exit all.*)

SCENE II

Office. A CLERK *sitting.* SENTRY *pacing up and down at opposite door. Enter* GENERAL *with his aide-de-camp.* CLERK *jumps up.* SENTRY *salutes.*

GENERAL.

Where is the colonel?

CLERK.

He was asked to go to see the recruit, your excellency.

GENERAL.

Very well. Ask him to come here.

CLERK.

Yes, your excellency.

GENERAL.

What are you copying there? The deposition of the recruit?

CLERK.

Yes, your excellency.

GENERAL.

Give it to me.

(CLERK *gives it and goes out.*)

GENERAL.

(*giving paper to* AIDE-DE-CAMP.) Read it, please.

AIDE-DE-CAMP.

(*reading.*) "To the questions which were put to me: (1) Why I refused to take the oath; (2) Why I refused to carry out the demands of the government; and (3) what made me utter words offensive not only to the military body, but to the highest authority, I answer: to the first question: I will not take the oath because I profess the teaching of Christ. In His teaching Christ clearly forbids it, as in the Gospel, Matt. v. 33-37, and the Epistle of James, v. 12."

GENERAL.

There they are, discussing and putting their own interpretations on it.

AIDE-DE-CAMP.

(*continuing.*) "It is said in the Gospel Matt. v. 37, 'Let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil,' and James, v. 12: 'But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath; but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.'

"But even if there were not such explicit prohibition of swearing in the Gospel, I would not swear to fulfil the will of men, for according to Christ's teaching I am bound to fulfil the will of God, which may not coincide with the will of men."

GENERAL.

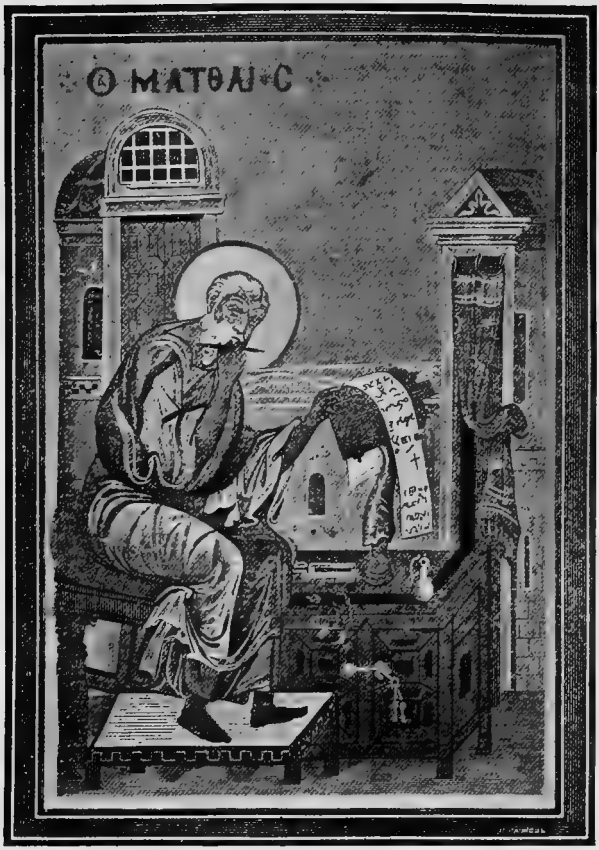
There they are, discussing! If I had my way, such things would not occur.

AIDE-DE-CAMP.

(*reading.*) "And I refuse to comply with the demands of men calling themselves the government because —"

GENERAL.

What impudence!



St. Matthew.

AIDE-DE-CAMP.

"Because these demands are criminal and wicked. I am required to enter the army, to be prepared and instructed how to murder. This is forbidden by the Old as well as by the New Testament, and, moreover, by my conscience. As to the third question —"

(*Enter* COLONEL *with* CLERK, GENERAL *shakes hands with him.*)

COLONEL.

You are reading the deposition?

GENERAL.

Yes. Unpardonably impudent. Continue.

AIDE-DE-CAMP.

(*reading.*) "As to the third question, what induced me to speak offensively to the Council. I answer, that I was led by my desire to serve God and to denounce shams which are perpetrated in His name. This desire I hope to preserve while I live. That is why —"

GENERAL.

Oh, enough of that rubbish! The question is, how to root it all out, and prevent him from corrupting our men. (*To* COLONEL.) Have you spoken to him?

COLONEL.

I have been talking to him all this time. I tried to appeal to his conscience, to make him understand that he was only making matters worse for himself and that he would not achieve anything by such methods. I spoke to him about his family. He was very excited, but he stuck to his words.

GENERAL.

It is idle to say much to him. We are soldiers; men of actions, not words. Have him brought here.

(*Exit* AIDE-DE-CAMP *and* CLERK.)

GENERAL.

(*sitting down.*) No, colonel. You were wrong. Such fellows must be dealt with in quite another fashion. Strong measures are needed to cut off the offending member. One foul sheep ruins the whole flock. Sentimentality has no place here. His being a prince and having a mother and a *fiancée* does not concern us. There is a soldier before us and we must fulfil the will of the Tsar.

COLONEL.

I only thought it would be easier to influence him by persuasion.

GENERAL.

Not at all. Firmness, only firmness. I had a case like this once before. He must be made to feel that he is nothing, that he is a grain of sand under the wheel of a chariot, and that he cannot impede its progress.

COLONEL.

Well, we can try.

GENERAL.

(*beginning to get angry.*) It is not a question of trying. I have nothing to try. I have served my sovereign for forty-four years, have given and am giving my life to the service, and suddenly a boy comes and wants to teach me, and quotes Bible texts. Let him talk that nonsense to the priests. To me he is either a soldier, or a prisoner. That's the end of it.

(*Enter* BORIS *under escort of two soldiers.* AIDE-DE-CAMP *follows him in.*)

GENERAL.

(*pointing to* BORIS *with his finger.*) Place him there.

BORIS.

No necessity whatever to "place" me anywhere. I will stand or sit where I please, for as to your authority over me, I do not —

GENERAL.

Silence! You don't recognise my authority — I'll make you recognise it!

BORIS.

(*sits down.*) How wrong of you to shout like that!

GENERAL.

Lift him up and make him stand!

(*Soldiers raise* BORIS *up.*)

BORIS.

That you can do. You can kill me, but you cannot force me to obey you.

GENERAL.

Silence, I say! Listen to what I say to you.

BORIS.

I do not in the least wish to hear what you say.

GENERAL.

He is mad. He must be sent to the hospital to test his sanity. That's the only thing to do with him.

COLONEL.

We have orders to send him to the Gendarmerie Department to be questioned.

GENERAL.

Very well — do so. But put him into uniform.

COLONEL.

He refuses to wear it.

GENERAL.

Then tie his hands and feet. (*To* BORIS.) Now listen to what I am going to tell you. It is a matter of perfect indifference to me what becomes of you. But for your own sake I would advise you to think it over. You will only rot in the fortress, and be of no use to any one. Give it up. You were excited, and so was I. (*Slapping him on the shoulder.*) Go — take your oath and drop all that nonsense. (*To the* AIDE-DE-CAMP.) Is the priest here? (*To* BORIS.) Well? (BORIS *is silent.*) Why don't you answer? I assure you I'm advising you for your own good. The weakest goes to the wall. You can keep your own ideas and merely serve your time. We won't be hard on you. Well?

BORIS.

I have nothing more to say. I have said everything.

GENERAL.

Just now you said that there were such and such verses in the Gospel. Surely the priests know

that? You'd better talk that over with the priest, and then think it over. That's surely the best way. Good-bye. I hope to meet you again and be able to congratulate you on your entrance into the service of the Tsar. Send the priest here.

(*Exit* GENERAL *with* COLONEL *and* AIDE-DE-CAMP.)

BORIS.

(*to soldiers and* CLERK.) You see how they talk. They are perfectly aware themselves that they are deceiving you. Don't give in to them. Throw down your arms. Go away. Let them flog you to death in their disciplinary battalions. Even that is better than to be the slaves of these impostors!

CLERK.

No, that's impossible. How can we get on without the army? It is impossible.

BORIS.

We must not reason in that way. We must do just as God desires. And God desires us to —

SOLDIER.

Then why do they call it the "Christ-serving Army?"

BORIS.

That is not said anywhere. It's the invention of these impostors.

SOLDIER.

How so? The bishops must know.

(*Enter* POLICE OFFICER *with Stenographer.*)

POLICE OFFICER.

(*to* CLERK.) Is Prince Cheremshanov the recruit here?

CLERK.

Yes, sir. There he is.

POLICE OFFICER.

Please step this way. Are you the Prince Boris Cheremshanov who refused to take the oath?

BORIS.

I am he.

(*Officer sits down and motions to a seat opposite.*)

POLICE OFFICER.

Please sit down.

BORIS.

I think there's no use in our talking.

POLICE OFFICER.

I don't agree. To you at any rate it may be

of advantage. You see, I have been informed that you refused military service and refused to take the oath, which raises the suspicion that you belong to the revolutionary party. And this I have to investigate. If this is true, then we must remove you from military service and either put you in prison or exile you, according to the extent of your participation in the revolutionary movement. Otherwise we leave you to the military authorities. Please note that I have told you everything quite frankly, and I trust you will show the same confidence in talking to us.

BORIS.

In the first place I cannot have any confidence in those who wear that (*pointing to the uniform.*) In the second place your very office is of such a nature that I cannot respect it, but, on the contrary, despise it from my heart. But I will not refuse to answer your questions. What is it you want to know?

POLICE OFFICER.

First, please, your name, rank, and religious faith.

BORIS.

You know all that, so that I will not answer. Only one of those questions is of any importance

to me. I do *not* belong to the so-called Orthodox Church.

POLICE OFFICER.

Then what is your religion?

BORIS.

I cannot define it.

POLICE OFFICER.

Still —

BORIS.

Let us say Christian, founded on the Sermon on the Mount.

POLICE OFFICER.

Take that down.

(*Stenographer writes.*)

POLICE OFFICER.

(*to* BORIS.) But you acknowledge that you belong to some state, some class?

BORIS.

I do not admit that. I consider myself a man, a servant of God.

POLICE OFFICER.

But why do you not recognise your allegiance to the Russian State?

BORIS.

Because I do not recognise the existence of any State.

POLICE OFFICER.

What do you mean — when you say you do not recognise it? Do you want to destroy it?

BORIS.

Most certainly I do, and I work to that end.

POLICE OFFICER.

(*to* SCRIBE.) Take that down. (*To* BORIS.) By what means do you work?

BORIS.

By denouncing deceit and lies, and by spreading the truth. Just now, the moment before you entered, I was telling these soldiers that they must not believe the deceit in which they are made to share.

POLICE OFFICER.

But beside these measures of denunciation and proselytising, do you admit other means?

BORIS.

I not only exclude violence, but I consider it the greatest sin, and all underhand actions also.

POLICE OFFICER.

(*to* SCRIBE.) Take it down. Very good. Now allow me to ask you about your acquaintances, your friends. Do you know Ivashenkov?

BORIS.

No.

POLICE OFFICER.

And Klein?

BORIS.

I have heard of him, but I have never seen him.

(*Enter* CHAPLAIN.)

POLICE OFFICER.

Well, I think that is all. I consider that you are not a dangerous person. You do not concern our department. I hope you will soon be released. Good-day. (*Shakes hands.*)

BORIS.

There is one thing I should like to say to you. Excuse me, but I cannot resist saying it. Why have you chosen such a bad and wicked calling? I would advise you to leave it.

POLICE OFFICER.

(*smiling.*) Thank you for your advice: I have my reasons. Now, father, I'll give up my place to you.

(*The priest, an old man with cross and Testament, steps forward. The* SCRIBE *advances to receive his blessing.*)

CHAPLAIN.

(*to* BORIS.) Why do you grieve your superiors and refuse to perform the duty of a Christian by serving your Tsar and country?

BORIS.

(*smiling.*) It is precisely because I wish to perform the duties of a Christian that I do not wish to be a soldier.

CHAPLAIN.

Why do you not wish it? It is written, "Lay down your life for your friends." That is the part of a true Christian.

BORIS.

Yes, to lay down your own, but not take the life of others. To give up my life is just what I wish.

CHAPLAIN.

You judge wrongly, young man. And what did Jesus Christ say to the soldiers?

BORIS.

(*smiling.*) That only proves that even in His time soldiers plundered, and He forbade them to do so.

CHAPLAIN.

Well — why do you refuse to take the oath?

BORIS.

You know it is forbidden in the Gospel.

CHAPLAIN.

Not at all. How was it that when Pilate said, "In the name of God I ask you, are you the Christ?" Our Lord Jesus Christ answered, "I am He." That proves an oath is not forbidden.

BORIS.

Are you not ashamed to say that, you, an old man?

CHAPLAIN.

I advise you not to be obstinate. It is not for us to change the world. Take the oath, and have done with it. As for what is sin and what is not sin, leave that for the Church to decide.

BORIS.

Leave it to you? Are you not afraid to take such a weight of sin upon your soul?

CHAPLAIN.

What sin? I have always been true to the faith in which I was educated. I have been a priest now for over thirty years; there can be no sin upon my soul.

BORIS.

Then whose is the sin of deceiving so many

people? You know what *their* heads are full of. (*Points to the sentry.*)

CHAPLAIN.

That, young man, is not for us to judge. Our duty is to obey our superiors.

BORIS.

Leave me alone. I pity you, and what you say disgusts me. If you were like that general it would not be so bad. But you come with cross and Bible to try to persuade me in the name of Christ to deny Christ. Go — go! (*Excitedly.*) Go. Take me away where I shall see no one. I am tired — I am terribly tired.

CHAPLAIN.

Well, good-bye.

(*Enter* AIDE-DE-CAMP. BORIS *retires to back of scene.*)

AIDE-DE-CAMP.

Well?

CHAPLAIN.

Great stubbornness. Great insubordination.

AIDE-DE-CAMP.

He has not consented to take the oath and to serve?

CHAPLAIN.

Not in the least.

AIDE-DE-CAMP.

Then I shall have to take him to the hospital.

CHAPLAIN.

To make out that he is ill. Of course that's the best way; otherwise his example might be bad for the rest.

AIDE-DE-CAMP.

He will be examined in the ward for mental ailments. These are my orders.

CHAPLAIN.

Of course. Good-day. (*Exit.*)

AIDE-DE-CAMP.

(*approaching Boris.*) Please come with me. I am ordered to escort you.

BORIS.

Where to?

AIDE-DE-CAMP.

Just for a time, to the hospital, where you will be more comfortable, and will have leisure to think the matter over.

BORIS.

I have thought it over for some time. But let us go. (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE III

Reception-room in the Hospital.

(HEAD PHYSICIAN *and* HOUSE SURGEON *and* PATIENTS *in hospital dress.* WARDERS *in blouses.*)

SICK OFFICER.

I tell you, you simply make me worse. There were times when I felt quite well.

HEAD PHYSICIAN.

Don't get so excited. I am quite willing to discharge you, but you know yourself that it is unsafe for you to be at liberty. If I knew that you would be taken care of —

SICK OFFICER.

You think I shall begin to drink again. Oh no! I've learned my lesson. Every additional day spent here is simply killing me. You do just the contrary to what (*over excited*) should be done. You are cruel. It is all very well for you —

HEAD PHYSICIAN.

Calm yourself. (*Makes a sign to* WARDERS *who approach the* OFFICER *from behind.*)

SICK OFFICER.

It's all very well for you to talk when you are free. But how do you think I feel here in the company of lunatics? (*To* WARDERS.) Why are you coming so near to me? Get away?

HEAD PHYSICIAN.

I beg you to be calm.

SICK OFFICER.

And I beg, I insist on my discharge. (*Shrieks, rushes at doctor.* WARDERS *seize him — a struggle — they lead him away.*)

HOUSE SURGEON.

Same thing all over again. He was on the point of striking you.

HEAD PHYSICIAN.

Alcoholic subject, and there's nothing to be done for him. Still there is some improvement.

(*Enter* AIDE-DE-CAMP.)

AIDE-DE-CAMP.

Good morning.

HEAD PHYSICIAN.

Good morning.

AIDE-DE-CAMP.

I have brought you a very interesting case. A certain Prince Cheremshanov was to do his military service, and refused on the ground of the Gospel. He was handed over to the police, but they found him outside their jurisdiction, and decided it was not a political case. The chaplain talked to him, but without the slightest effect.

HEAD PHYSICIAN.

(*laughing.*) And as usual you bring him to us as the last resort. Well, let's have a look at him.

(*Exit* HOUSE SURGEON.)

AIDE-DE-CAMP.

They say he is a well-educated fellow, and that he's engaged to a rich girl. It is very strange. I must say the hospital is exactly the right place for him.

HEAD PHYSICIAN.

It must be a case of mania —

(BORIS *is brought in.*)

Good morning. Please sit down. We'll have a little talk. (*To the others.*) Leave us alone.

(*Exeunt all save* BORIS *and* PHYSICIAN.)

BORIS.

I would like to ask you, if you are going to shut me up somewhere, to do it as quickly as possible and let me have a rest.

HEAD PHYSICIAN.

Excuse me: I must comply with the regulations. I will merely put a few questions to you. How do you feel? From what are you suffering?

BORIS.

There's nothing the matter with me. I am perfectly well.

HEAD PHYSICIAN.

Yes; but your conduct is different from the conduct of others.

BORIS.

I am acting according to the dictates of my conscience.

HEAD PHYSICIAN.

You have refused to perform your military duty. What is your motive?

BORIS.

I am a Christian, and therefore cannot kill.

HEAD PHYSICIAN.

But is it not necessary to protect the country

from foreign enemies, and restrain from evil those who disturb the peace within?

BORIS.

The country is not attacked by any enemies, and as for disturbers of the peace within her borders, there are more of those within the Government than among the people towards whom the Government uses violence.

HEAD PHYSICIAN.

What do you mean by that?

BORIS.

I mean that the chief cause of evil — alcohol — is sold by the Government; a false religious creed is spread by the Government; and the very military service, such as I am required to perform, and which is the principal means of corruption in the country, is required by the Government.

HEAD PHYSICIAN.

Then, according to your views, Government and State are unnecessary.

BORIS.

I do not know; but I am quite sure I must not participate in these evils.

HEAD PHYSICIAN.

But what will become of the world? We are given a mind with which to look ahead.

BORIS.

Yes, and we are also given common sense to see that the organisation of society shall not be founded on violence, but on love, and that the refusal of one man to participate in evil has nothing dangerous in it —

HEAD PHYSICIAN.

Now please let me make an examination. Will you kindly lie down? (*Begins to examine him.*) Do you feel any pain here?

BORIS.

No.

HEAD PHYSICIAN.

Nor here?

BORIS.

No.

HEAD PHYSICIAN.

Breathe. Now don't breathe. Thank you. Now allow me. (*Takes out a measure and measures his nose and his forehead.*) Now be so kind as to shut your eyes and walk.

BORIS.

Aren't you ashamed to do all that?

HEAD PHYSICIAN.

What?

BORIS.

All these silly things. You know perfectly well that I'm all right, and have been sent here for refusing to take part in their wickedness, and as they had no arguments to offer in opposition to my truth, they pretend that they think me abnormal. And you aid them in that! That is despicable and disgraceful. You'd better stop it.

HEAD PHYSICIAN.

Then you do not wish to walk?

BORIS.

No, I do not. You may torment me as much as you like. That is your business. But I do not wish to help you in it. (*Vehemently.*) Stop it, I say!

(HEAD PHYSICIAN *presses a button. Two* WARDERS *enter.*)

HEAD PHYSICIAN.

Be calm, please. I quite understand that your

nerves are rather over-strained. Would you not like to go to your quarters?

(*Enter* HOUSE SURGEON.)

HOUSE SURGEON.

Visitors have come for Cheremshanov.

BORIS.

Who are they?

HOUSE SURGEON.

Sarintsev and his daughter.

BORIS.

I should like to see them.

HEAD PHYSICIAN.

I have no objection. Ask them in. You may receive them here.

(*Enter* NICHOLAS IVANOVICH *and* LUBA. PRINCESS CHEREMSHANOVA *puts her head into the door, saying, "Go in, I'll come later."*)

LUBA.

(*goes straight to* BORIS, *takes his face between her hands, and kisses him.*) Poor Boris!

BORIS.

No, don't pity me. I feel so well — so happy.

I am so easy in my mind. (*To* NICHOLAS IVANOVICH.) How do you do? (*Embraces him.*)

NICHOLAS.

I came to tell you something important. In the first place, it is worse in such cases to overdo it than to do too little; in the second place, you must act according to the Gospel, taking no thought as to your future words and acts. When taken before the authorities "think not what ye shall say, for the Holy Ghost will teach you in that hour what ye ought to say." The moment to act is not when your reason dictates this or that, but only when your whole being determines your action.

BORIS.

That's just what I did. I did not think I should refuse to serve. But when I saw all this falsehood, the emblem of justice, the documents, the police, and the members of the Council smoking — I could not help speaking as I did. It seemed a terrible thing to do, but only till I began. Then all became so simple and delightful.

(LUBA *sits weeping.*)

NICHOLAS.

Above all, do nothing for the sake of the praise of men, or in order to please those whose esteem

you value. As for myself, I tell you honestly that if you took the oath this moment and entered the army, I would love and respect you no less; possibly even more than before, because it is not what is done in the world that is of value, but what is done within the soul.

BORIS.

That is certainly so, because if a thing is done within the soul, it will bring about a change in the world.

NICHOLAS.

Well, I have said what I had to say. Your mother is here, and she is quite broken-hearted. If you can do what she desires, do it. That is what I wanted to tell you.

(In the corridor frightful screaming of the lunatics. One lunatic bursts into the room. WARDERS *follow and drag him away.)*

LUBA.

This is dreadful! And you will have to be here! *(Weeps.)*

BORIS.

This doesn't frighten me. Nothing frightens me now. I feel at peace. The only thing that I

fear is your attitude to all this. Help me — I'm sure you will help me.

LUBA.

How can I be glad?

NICHOLAS.

Be glad. That is impossible. Neither am I glad. I suffer for him and would willingly take his place. But I am suffering, and yet I know that it is for the best.

LUBA.

For the best! When will they let him go?

BORIS.

No one knows. I am not thinking about the future; the present is joyful. And you could make it still more so.

(*Enter* PRINCESS.)

PRINCESS.

I can wait no longer. (*To* NICHOLAS IVANOVICH.) Well, have you persuaded him? Are you willing, Boris darling? You must know how I have suffered. Thirty years of my life have been given to you. To bring you up and be so proud of you, and then when all is ready and finished, suddenly to give up everything. Prison, disgrace! No, Boris —

BORIS.

Listen, mother.

PRINCESS.

(*to* NICHOLAS IVANOVICH.) Why don't you say something? You have brought about his ruin, and you ought to persuade him. It's all very well for you. Luba, speak to him!

LUBA.

What can I do?

BORIS.

Mother, try to understand that some things are impossible. Just as it is impossible to fly, so it is impossible for me to serve in the army.

PRINCESS.

You only imagine you cannot! It's all nonsense. Others have served, and are serving now. You and Nicholas Ivanovich have invented a new Christian creed that is not Christian at all. It is a diabolical creed, that causes suffering to every one around you.

BORIS.

So it is written in the Gospel.

PRINCESS.

Nothing of that sort is said. And if it is, it's

simply stupid. Boris darling, spare me! (*Falls on his neck and sobs.*) My whole life has been full of sorrow. You have been my only gleam of gladness, and now you turn it into anguish. Boris, have pity!

BORIS.

It is very, very painful to me, mother, but I cannot promise you that.

PRINCESS.

Do not refuse. Say you will try!

NICHOLAS.

Say you will think it over, and do think it over.

BORIS.

Very well — I will do that. But have pity on me, also, mother. It is hard for me too.

(*Again desperate screams in a corridor.*)

I am in a lunatic asylum, you see, and I may lose my reason.

(*Enter* HEAD PHYSICIAN.)

HEAD PHYSICIAN.

Madame, this may have the worst results. Your son is in a very excited state. I think we had better consider the visit at an end. The regular visiting day is Thursday before twelve.

PRINCESS.

Well, well, I will go. Good-bye, Boris. Only do think it over. Spare me, and on Thursday meet me with good news. (*Kisses him.*)

NICHOLAS.

(*shaking hands with him.*) Think it over, with God's help, as if to-morrow you were going to die. That is the only way to make the right decision. Good-bye.

BORIS.

(*approaching* LUBA.) What are you going to say to me?

LUBA.

What can I say? I cannot be untruthful. I do not understand why you torture yourself and others. I do not understand, and there is nothing I can say. (*Weeps.*)

(*They all go.*)

BORIS.

(*alone.*) Oh, how difficult, how difficult it is! God help me!

(*Enter* WARDERS *with hospital attire.*)

WARDER.

Will you please put this on?

BORIS.

(*begins to change — then.*) No, I will not!

(*They change his garments by force.*)

ACT IV

SCENE I

Moscow. A year has passed since the third act. Big drawing-room with piano arranged for dancing party in Sarintsev's house. Footman arranges flowers in front of piano. A Christmas tree.

(*Enter* MARIE IVANOVNA *in elegant silk dress, with* ALEXANDRA IVANOVNA.)

MARIE.

It isn't a ball. It is only a small dance. A party, as we used to say, for the young people. I can't let my children go out to dances and never give a party myself.

ALEXANDRA.

I'm afraid Nicholas will be displeased.

MARIE.

What can I do? (*To* FOOTMAN.) Put it here. Heaven knows I do not want to grieve him. But I think he is less exacting now, on the whole.

ALEXANDRA.

Oh no! Only he does not talk about it. He seemed quite upset when he went to his room after dinner.

MARIE.

But what is to be done? what is to be done? We must all live. There are six children, and if I did not provide some amusement for them at home, Heaven knows what they would do. At any rate, I am happy about Luba.

ALEXANDRA.

Has he proposed?

MARIE.

Practically. He has spoken to her and she has accepted him.

ALEXANDRA.

That will be another awful blow for him.

MARIE.

But he knows. He cannot help knowing.

ALEXANDRA.

He does not like him.

MARIE.

(*to* FOOTMAN.) Put the fruit on the side-board. Whom do you mean? Alexis Mikhailovich?

Of course not, for he is the embodied negation of all his theories — a man of the world, nice, kind, agreeable. Oh, that awful nightmare of Boris Cheremshanov! How is he now?

ALEXANDRA.

Lisa has been to see him. He's still there. She says he has grown very thin, and the doctors are anxious about his life or reason.

MARIE.

He is a victim of his dreadful theories. His life ruined — to what end? It certainly was not my wish.

(*Enter* PIANIST.)

You have come to play for the dancing?

PIANIST.

Yes, I am the pianist.

MARIE.

Please sit down and wait. Will you have some tea?

PIANIST.

No, thank you. (*Goes to piano.*)

MARIE.

I never wished it. I was fond of Boris. But

of course he was no match for Luba, especially after taking up with Nicholas's ideas.

ALEXANDRA.

Still, his strength of conviction is extraordinary. What agony he has been through! They tell him that if he will not give in he must stay where he is or else be sent to the fortress, and he gives them but one answer. And Lisa says he's so happy, even merry.

MARIE.

Fanatic! Oh, there's Alexis Mikhailovich!

(*Enter the brilliant* ALEXIS MIKHAILOVICH STARKOVSKY *in evening dress.*)

STARKOVSKY.

I have come early. (*Kisses the hands of both ladies.*)

MARIE.

So much the better.

STARKOVSKY.

And Lubov Nicolaevna? She said she was going to dance a lot to make up for what she had missed. I volunteered to help her.

MARIE.

She is arranging the favours for the cotillion.

STARKOVSKY.

I'll go and help her. May I?

MARIE.

Certainly.

(STARKOVSKY *turns to go, and meets* LUBA *coming toward him carrying a cushion on which are stars and ribbons.* LUBA *in evening dress, not low-necked.*)

LUBA.

Oh, there you are! That's right. Do help me. There are two more cushions in the drawing-room, bring them here. How do you do! How do you do!

STARKOVSKY.

I am off! (*Goes.*)

MARIE.

(*to* LUBA.) Listen, Luba. To-night our guests are sure to make insinuations and ask questions. May we announce it?

LUBA.

No, mother, no. Why? Let them ask. It would grieve father.

MARIE.

But he must know, or at least guess. And we

shall have to tell him sooner or later. I really think it is best to announce it to-night. It is a farcical secret.

LUBA.

No, no, mother — please! It would spoil the whole evening. No, don't!

MARIE.

Very well, as you like.

LUBA.

Or, anyhow, not till the end of the evening, just before supper. (*Calling out.*) Well, are you bringing them?

MARIE.

I will go and see to Natasha.

(*Exit with* ANNA IVANOVNA.)

STARKOVSKY.

(*brings three cushions, the top one under his chin, and lets something drop.*) Don't you trouble, Lubov Nicolaevna. I'll pick them up. I say, what a lot of favours you've got! The thing is to distribute them properly! Vania, come here.

(*Enter* VANIA, *carrying more favours.*)

VANIA.

That's the last of them. Luba, Alexis Mikhailovich and I have got a bet on as to who will get most favours.

STARKOVSKY.

It's very easy for you. You know everybody, so you are sure of theirs in advance. I must win the girls before I can get any favours at all. So I have a handicap of forty points, you see.

VANIA.

But you are grown up, and I'm only a boy.

STARKOVSKY.

I'm not very grown up, and so I am worse than a boy.

LUBA.

Vania, please go to my room and bring me the paste and my needle-case; they're on the shelf. But for mercy's sake don't break the watch there.

VANIA.

(*running off.*) I'll break everything.

STARKOVSKY.

(*takes* LUBA'S *hand.*) May I, Luba? I am so happy. (*Kisses her hand.*) The mazurka is mine, but that isn't enough. There isn't time in

the mazurka to say much, and I have a great deal to say. May I telegraph to my people and tell them you have accepted me and how happy I am?

LUBA.

Yes, you can do it to-night.

STARKOVSKY.

One word more. How will Nicholas Ivanovich take the news? Have you told him? Have you told him? Yes?

LUBA.

No, I have not, but I will. He will take it just as he takes everything now that concerns his family. He will say, "Do as you like." But in his heart he will be grieved.

STARKOVSKY.

Because I am not Cheremshanov — because I am a chamberlain, a marshal of nobility?

LUBA.

Yes. But I have tried to fight against myself — to deceive myself for his sake. And it is not because I do not love him that I do not follow his wishes, but because I cannot act a lie. And he says himself that one should not. I long to live my own life!

STARKOVSKY.

Life is the only truth there is. What has become of Cheremshanov?

LUBA.

(*agitated.*) Do not talk to me about him. I want to find fault with him even when he is suffering. I know it is because I am to blame about him. But one thing I do know: that there is such a thing as love — real love — and that I never had for him.

STARKOVSKY.

Do you really mean it, Luba?

LUBA.

You want me to say that it is you that I love with a real love? I will not say that. I certainly love you. . . . But it is a different kind of love. Neither of them is the real thing. If I could only put them both together. . . .

STARKOVSKY.

Oh no, I'm quite content with mine. (*Kisses her hand.*) Luba!

LUBA.

(*moving from him.*) No; we must talk this over. You see, the guests are beginning to arrive.

(*Enter* COUNTESS *with* TONIA *and a younger girl.*)

Mother will be here directly.

COUNTESS.

We are the first then?

STARKOVSKY.

Somebody must be first. I offered to make an india-rubber lady to be the first arrival.

(*Enter* STEPHEN *with* VANIA, *who brings the paste and needles.*)

STEPHEN.

(*to* TONIA.) I hoped to see you last night at the Italian opera.

TONIA.

We were at my aunt's, sewing for the poor.

(*Enter* STUDENTS, LADIES, *and* MARIE IVANOVNA.)

COUNTESS.

(*to* MARIE IVANOVNA.) Shall we not see Nicholas Ivanovich?

MARIE.

No; he never leaves his rooms.

STEPHEN.

How did Cheremshanov's affair end?

MARIE.

He is still in the asylum, poor boy.

COUNTESS.

What obstinacy!

ONE OF THE GUESTS.

What an extraordinary delusion! What good can come of it?

STUDENT.

Take your partners for the quadrille, please!

(*Claps his hands. They take up their positions and dance. Enter* ALEXANDRA IVANOVNA, *and walks up to her sister.*)

ALEXANDRA.

He is frightfully excited. He has been to see Boris, and on returning he saw the dancing going on. He wants to go away. I went up to his door, and heard his conversation with Alexander Petrovich.

MARIE.

What did they say?

VOICE FROM THE DANCE.

Rond des dames. Les cavaliers en avant.

ALEXANDRA.

He has made up his mind that he cannot possibly continue to live here, and he is going away.

MARIE.

What a torment that man is!

(*Exit* MARIE IVANOVNA.)

SCENE II

NICHOLAS IVANOVICH'S *room. Music is heard from afar. He has his coat on, and puts a letter on the table. With him is a tramp,* ALEXANDER PETROVICH, *in rags.*

ALEXANDER.

Don't be uneasy. We can get to the Caucasus without a penny; and when we are once there you can arrange matters.

NICHOLAS.

We will take the train to Tula, and then we will go on foot. Now, we're ready. (*Puts the letter in the middle of the table, and goes towards the door. Meets* MARIE IVANOVNA, *who enters.*)

NICHOLAS.

What have you come for?

MARIE.

To see what you are doing.

NICHOLAS.

I am suffering terribly.

MARIE.

What have I come for? Not to let you do a cruel thing. Why do you do it? What have I done?

NICHOLAS.

Why? Because I cannot go on living like this; I cannot endure this horrible life of depravity!

MARIE.

But this is awful. You call my life, which I devote to you and to the children, depraved! (*Noticing the presence of* ALEXANDER PETROVICH.) *Renvoyez au moins cet homme. Je ne veux pas qu'il soit temoin de cette conversation.*

ALEXANDER.

(*in broken French.*) *Comprenez toujours moi parté.*

NICHOLAS.

Wait for me outside, Alexander Petrovich. I will come directly.

(*Exit* ALEXANDER PETROVICH.)

MARIE.

What can you have in common with that man? Why he is more to you than your wife passes all comprehension. Where do you intend to go?

NICHOLAS.

I was leaving a letter for you. I did not want to talk about it. It is too painful. But if you wish I will try to tell you calmly what is in it.

MARIE.

No; I absolutely cannot understand why you hate and punish the wife who has given up everything for you. Can you say that I go out into society, that I love dress or flirtations? No! my whole life has been devoted to my family. I nursed all my children myself; I brought them up myself; and during these last years the whole burden of their education and all the management of our affairs has fallen on me.

NICHOLAS.

(*interrupting.*) But all the weight of that burden is due to your refusal to lead the life I proposed.

MARIE.

But what you proposed was impossible. Ask anybody! I could not let the children grow up

illiterate, as you desired; and I could not do the cooking and the washing with my own hands.

NICHOLAS.

I never asked you to.

MARIE.

Well, something very like it. You call yourself a Christian, and you want to do good in the world. You say you love humanity. Then why do you torment the woman who has given her whole life to you?

NICHOLAS.

In what way am I tormenting you? I love you, but —

MARIE.

Is it not tormenting me to leave me and to go away? What will all the world say? One of the two — either that I am a bad, wicked woman, or that you are mad.

NICHOLAS.

Let them say I am mad then. I cannot live like this.

MARIE.

Why is it so terrible that I should give a party? — the only one during the whole season, for fear of grieving you? I only did it because every one

said it was a necessity. Ask Mary, ask Varvara Vasilievna. You treat this as a crime, and make me suffer disgrace for it. It is not so much the disgrace I mind. The worst of it is that you do not love me — you love the whole world, even that drunkard Alexander Petrovich. . . . But I still love you — I cannot live without you. What have I done? what have I done? (*She weeps.*)

NICHOLAS.

You will not understand my life — my spiritual life.

MARIE.

I do want to, but I can't. I only see that your idea of Christianity makes you hate your family, and hate me. Why, I do not understand.

NICHOLAS.

But others understand.

MARIE.

Who? Alexander Petrovich, who gets money from you?

NICHOLAS.

He and Ermilovich, Tonia, and Vasily. But that is immaterial. If no one understood, it would alter nothing.

MARIE.

Vasily Ermilovich has repented, and has re-

turned to his parish, and at this very moment Tonia is dancing and flirting with Stephen.

NICHOLAS.

I am very sorry. But this cannot make black white, nor can it change my life. Masha, you do not need me — let me go! I have tried to take part in your life — to bring into it the thing that is life to me — but it cannot be done. The only result is that I torture both you and myself; and it is not only torture to me, but it ruins everything I attempt. Everybody — even that very Alexander Petrovich — has the right to say, and does say, that I am an impostor: that I say one thing and do another; that I preach the poverty of Christ and live in luxury, under cover of having given everything to my wife.

MARIE.

Then you are ashamed of yourself before the world? Are you not above that?

NICHOLAS.

It is not that I am ashamed of myself — though I certainly am — but that I am hindering the work of God.

MARIE.

You say yourself that the work of God goes on

in spite of all opposition. But leaving that aside, tell me what you want me to do.

NICHOLAS.

I have told you.

MARIE.

But, Nicholas, you know that that is impossible. Think of it. Luba is just going to be married, Vania has entered the university, and Missie and Katia are at school: how could I interrupt all that?

NICHOLAS.

But I? What am I to do?

MARIE.

Practise what you preach: endure and love. Is that so difficult? Only put up with us — do not deprive us of yourself! What is it that distresses you so?

(VANIA *rushes in.*)

VANIA.

Mother, you are wanted.

MARIE.

Say I can't come. Go; go away.

VANIA.

Please come!

(*Exit.*)

NICHOLAS.

You will not see my point of view, and understand me.

MARIE.

I only wish I could.

NICHOLAS.

No, you do not wish to understand; and we are growing further and further apart. Put yourself in my place for a moment and think, and you will understand. In the first place, life here is depraved — such words anger you, but I can use no other when speaking of a life founded on robbery — because the money you live on comes from the land you have stolen from the people. Besides, I see how the children are being corrupted by it. "Woe to him who offends one of these little ones!" — and before my very eyes I see my children ruined and corrupted. Nor can I bear to see grown men dressed up in swallow-tailed coats serving us as though they were slaves. Every meal is a misery.

MARIE.

But it has always been so. It is so in all houses — abroad and everywhere.

NICHOLAS.

Since I have realised that we are all brothers, I cannot look on without pain.

MARIE.

It is your own fault. One can imagine anything.

NICHOLAS.

(*hotly.*) This want of understanding is awful. To-day I spent the morning among the scavengers in the Rijánov Night Lodgings. I saw a child dying of starvation; a boy that had become a drunkard; a consumptive laundress going to rinse her linen in the river: and I come home and a footman in a white tie opens my front door to me. I hear my son, a young boy, tell that footman to bring him a glass of water, and I see a regiment of servants that work for us. Then I go to Boris, who is giving up his life for the truth, and I see this pure, strong, resolute man deliberately driven to madness and to death in order that they may get rid of him. I know, and they know, that he has organic heart trouble; and they provoke him, and then put him among raving maniacs! Oh, it is awful! And now I return home to learn that my daughter — the only one of my family who understood not me, but the truth — has

thrown over both the truth and the man she was engaged to, and had promised to love, and is going to marry a flunkey — a liar.

MARIE.

What a very Christian sentiment!

NICHOLAS.

Yes, it is wrong. I am to blame. But I want you to enter into my feeling. I only say that she has repudiated the truth.

MARIE.

You say the truth. The rest, the majority, say error. Vasily Ermilovich thought he had gone astray, but now he returned to the Church.

NICHOLAS.

It is impossible.

MARIE.

He wrote all about it to Lisa, and she will show you the letter. These things do not last. It's the same with Tonia, not to mention Alexander Petrovich, who simply finds it profitable.

NICHOLAS.

(*getting angry.*) That is immaterial. I only want you to understand me. I still consider that truth remains truth. It is painful to me to come

home and see a Christmas tree, a ball, hundreds squandered when others are dying of hunger. I can *not* live like this! Have mercy on me! I am worn out. Let me go! Good-bye.

MARIE.

If you go, I go with you; and if not with you, I will throw myself under your train. Let them all perish — all — Missie — Katia — all of them. My God, my God, what anguish! Why is it?

(*Sobbing.*)

NICHOLAS.

(*calling at the door.*) Alexander Petrovich! Go. I shall not go with you. I shall stay. (*Takes off his coat.*)

MARIE.

We have not much longer to live. Do not let us spoil our life after twenty-eight years together. I will not give any more parties, but do not pain me so!

(VANIA *and* KATIA *rush in.*)

BOTH.

Mother, come quick!

MARIE.

I'm coming — I'm coming! Then let us forgive each other.

(*Exeunt* MARIE IVANOVNA *and* CHILDREN.)

NICHOLAS.

(*alone.*) A child — a perfect child! Or — a cunning woman! Ah, yes — a cunning child. That is it! O Thou dost not desire me for Thy servant. Thou wouldest humiliate me that all should point at me and say, "He talks but he does not act." I submit. He knows best what He desires. Humility, simplicity. Oh! if I could only raise myself to Him. (*Enter* LISA.)

LISA.

Excuse me: I came to bring you a letter from Vasily Ermilovich. It was written to me, but he wanted me to tell you about it.

NICHOLAS.

Is it really true then?

LISA.

Yes. Read what he says.

NICHOLAS.

Will you read it to me?

LISA.

(*reading.*) "I am writing to ask you to communicate this to Nicholas Ivanovich. I profoundly regret the error which made me openly renounce the Holy Orthodox Church, and I re-

joice in my return. I wish the same for you and for Nicholas Ivanovich, and I ask your forgiveness."

NICHOLAS.

They have driven the poor man to this, but still it is terrible.

LISA.

I wanted to tell you also that the Princess has come. She came into my room in a terrible state of excitement, and says she must see you. She has just come from Boris. I think you had better not see her. What good could it do?

NICHOLAS.

No, call her in. Evidently this is to be a terrible day of trial.

LISA.

Then I'll call her. (*Exit.*)

NICHOLAS.

(*alone.*) Oh, just to remember that life consists in serving Thee! To remember that if Thou sendest trials to me, it is that Thou thinkest that I am able to bear them; that they are not above my strength, otherwise it would not be a trial. Father, help me — help me to do Thy will, and not my own.

(*Enter* PRINCESS.)

PRINCESS.

Oh, so you have admitted me—you have deigned to receive me. I will not shake your hand, because I hate and despise you.

NICHOLAS.

What has happened?

PRINCESS.

Just this! He is being transferred to the disciplinary battalion, and it is your doing.

NICHOLAS.

Princess, if you want anything, tell me what it is. If you have only come to abuse me, you are merely doing yourself harm. As for me, you cannot offend me, because I sympathise with you, and pity you with all my soul.

PRINCESS.

How charitable! Sublime Christianity! No, Monsieur Sarintsev, you cannot deceive me. I know you now. It is nothing to you that you have ruined my son, and here you are giving balls. Your daughter, who is engaged to my son, is about to make a match of which you approve, while you pretend to lead the simple life—you play at carpentering. How hateful you are to me, with your pharisaical life!

NICHOLAS.

Calm yourself, Princess, and tell me what you want. You have not come simply to abuse me.

PRINCESS.

Yes, partly. I had to pour out my anguish. What I want of you is this: they are sending him to the disciplinary battalion, and I cannot bear that. And it is you who have done it — you — you — you!

NICHOLAS.

Not I — God has done it. And God knows how I pity you. Do not set yourself in opposition to the will of God. He is testing you. Bear it humbly.

PRINCESS.

I cannot bear it humbly. My son is all the world to me, and you have taken him from me and have ruined him. I cannot accept it quietly. I have come to you, and I tell you again, and for the last time, that you have brought about his ruin, and you must save him. Go and obtain his release — go to the authorities, to the Tsar, to whomever you will. It is your duty. If you will not, I know what I shall do. You will answer to me for what you have done.

NICHOLAS.

Tell me what I am to do. I am willing to do all I can.

PRINCESS.

I repeat once more, you must save him. If you do not — remember. Good-bye. (*Exit.*)

(NICHOLAS *lies down on the sofa. Silence. Pause. Music of "Grossvater's Tanz" is distinctly heard.*)

STEPHEN.

Father isn't here. Come on.

(*Enter chain of dancers, adults and children.*)

LUBA.

(*seeing her father.*) Oh, you are here! I beg your pardon!

NICHOLAS.

(*rising.*) Never mind.

(*Chain goes through the room and out at the other door.*)

(*alone.*) Vasily Ermilovich has returned to the Church. Boris is ruined through me. Luba will marry. Is it possible that I am mistaken — mistaken in believing Thee? Ah no! Father, help me!

ACT V

SCENE I

A cell in the Disciplinary Battalion.— Prisoners sitting or lying about.— BORIS *reading the Gospel and making comments.*

A man who has been flogged led out from this cell.—" Oh, why is there not another Pugachev to avenge us? "

PRINCESS *rushes in.— She is turned out.— Struggle with an officer.*

Prisoners ordered to prayers.

BORIS *sent to the dungeon, and sentenced to be flogged.*

SCENE II

The CZAR'S *Study.— Cigarettes.— Jokes.— Blandishments.— Princess is announced.— Ordered to wait.*

Cringing PETITIONERS.

Then enter PRINCESS.— *Request refused.*

(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE III

MARIE IVANOVNA.— *Speak with doctor of illness of Nicholas Ivanovich.—* He has changed, is very mild, but dejected.

NICHOLAS IVANOVICH *enters with doctor.*—Treatment is futile.—The soul is more important, but I consent for the sake of my wife. (*Enter* TONIA *with* STEPHEN, LUBA *with* STARKOVSKY.) *Talk of the land.* NICHOLAS IVANOVICH *tries not to offend the others.* (*All go.*)

NICHOLAS.

(*alone with* LISA.) I am in a state of continual vacillation. Have I done right? I have achieved nothing. I have ruined Boris. Vasily Ermilovich has returned to the Church. I am an example of weakness. I see God did not want me to be His servant. He has many other servants. They will do the right thing without me. To see that clearly is to obtain peace of mind.

(LISA *goes.*—*He prays.*)

PRINCESS *dashes in and kills him.*—*All rush in.*—*He says he did it himself accidentally.*—*Writes petition to the Tsar.*

Enter VASILY ERMILOVICH *with Dukhobors.*—*Nicholas Ivanovich dies rejoicing that the falsehoods of the Church are broken down.*—*He realises the meaning of his life.*

ALTERNATIVE FOR LAST SCENE.

Letter from Boris full of desperate agitation. "I know—I have also passed through that."

LIBERALS.—*A professor from the height of his superiority forgives and explains.*

A Liberal society lady, wearing diamonds, present.—

"They are unable to understand. It will take a hundred years for them to do so."

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THE MAN WHO WAS DEAD

ACT I

SCENE I

ANNA PAVLOVNA, *a stout, middle-aged, tight-laced lady, is sitting at the tea-table.*

The NURSE *enters, with a teapot in her hand.*

NURSE.

May I take some boiling water?

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

Oh, certainly. How is baby?

NURSE.

As restless as can be. What is the good of ladies trying to nurse their babies themselves! All their worries the baby has to suffer for. When a mother stays awake all night long, and never leaves off crying, what can her milk be worth?

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

Oh, that's over, I think. She is quiet now.

NURSE.

Quiet, indeed! I can't stand looking at the poor dear. Just now she started off to write, and how she cried all the time!

SASHA (*entering*).

(*To* NURSE.) Lisa wants you.

NURSE.

I'm coming. (*She goes out.*)

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

Nurse says she still goes on crying. I do wish she could manage to get over it!

SASHA.

Mother, you are perfectly astonishing! How on earth can you expect her to behave as if nothing had happened, when she's just left her husband and taken her baby with her?

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

I don't exactly. But the past must be left to take care of itself. You may be quite sure that if I approve of my daughter having left her husband, and if I welcome the step she has taken — well, that he deserved it. She has no reason to

make herself miserable. She ought only to be overjoyed at being free now from such an abominable wretch.

SASHA.

How can you talk like that, mother? You know perfectly well it isn't true. He's not a wretch; he's a wonderful man — yes, he is. Oh, of course, I know he has faults, but he's wonderful!

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

Wonderful, indeed! The moment he has money, whether he gets it from his own pocket or somebody else's —

SASHA.

Mother! He has never taken anybody else's money.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

Yes, he has. Hasn't he taken his wife's money?

SASHA.

Why, he settled the whole of his fortune on Lisa!

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

It was the only thing for him to do. He knew he would squander everything he could lay hands on.

SASHA.

I'm sure I don't care whether he would or he wouldn't. All I know is that a wife ought not to leave her husband — particularly a husband like Fedia.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

I suppose you would have liked her to wait till he had spent absolutely everything they had, and not have objected in the least when he brought his gipsy mistresses home with him?

SASHA.

He hasn't got any mistresses.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

That is the worst of it — he seems to have bewitched you all; I don't know how. I should like to see him try it on with me. I can see through him, and he knows it. In Lisa's place I would have left him a good twelve months ago.

SASHA.

Oh, you think it's all so easy!

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

That's just where you're mistaken. It's very far from easy for me to see my daughter separated

from her husband. It is, indeed. But anything is better than that a young life like hers should be ruined. I consider it truly providential that she has made up her mind to go, and that everything is over between them.

SASHA.

Perhaps it isn't.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

It will be. If only he will consent to a divorce.

SASHA.

What will be the good of that?

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

The good will be that she is young and that she may still have some happiness in store for her.

SASHA.

It is simply disgusting to hear you talk like that, mother! Lisa can't love another man.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

Why not? Why shouldn't she, when she's free? There are men a thousand times better than your adored Fedia who would be enchanted to marry Lisa.

SASHA.

I know whom you mean, mother. It's very wrong of you. I know you mean Victor Karenin.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

Well, there's no harm in it if I do. He's been in love with her for ten years, and she loves him.

SASHA.

She doesn't love him in the least as a husband. They have just been friends ever since they were children.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

I know what such friendships mean. Oh, if only nothing crops up to prevent it!

A MAID *enters.*

What is it?

MAID.

The porter has come back with an answer to the note for Victor Mikhailovich.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

Who sent him?

MAID.

Elizaveta Andreevna.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

Well?

MAID.

Victor Mikhailovich told the porter he would be here directly.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

How extraordinary, when we were just talking about him! But what can she want him for now? (*To* SASHA.) Do you know?

SASHA.

Maybe I do. Maybe I don't.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

You always make secrets of things.

SASHA.

Lisa will tell you when she comes.

ANNA PAVLOVNA

shakes her head. (*To the* MAID.) The samovar is cold. Take it away, Duniasha, and make the water boil again.

The MAID *takes the samovar and goes out.* SASHA *rises as if to follow her from the room.*

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

You see I was right. She has sent for him at once.

SASHA.

I dare say it's some perfectly different reason from what you think.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

What for, then?

SASHA.

She doesn't care a scrap more for Karenin than for that old nurse Tripovna.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

You will see. I know her. She's sent for him because she wants him to console her.

SASHA.

O mother, how little you know her if you can think —

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

You will see. Yes, and I am very, very glad indeed.

SASHA.

We'll see. (*She goes out, humming.*)

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

(*Alone, shaking her head and muttering to herself.*) Very well, I don't mind. Very well, I don't mind. I —

MAID (*entering.*)

Victor Mikhailovich has come.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

Ask him in, and tell Elizaveta Andreevna.

The MAID *goes out by the door leading to the inner apartments.*

VICTOR KARENIN

entering, and shaking hands with ANNA PAVLOVNA. I got a note from Elizaveta Andreevna asking me to come round. I meant in any case to call this evening, so I was delighted . . . is she quite well?

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

She is all right; the baby is a little ailing. She will be here in a minute. (*Sadly.*) We are having a hard time just now. But you know all about that.

KARENIN.

I know. I was here the day before yesterday, when that letter came from him. But is this really a final decision?

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

I should think so! It would be utterly impossible to begin all over again.

KARENIN.

I should like to urge that in this case particularly second thoughts may be best. It is a terrible thing to tear lives apart that have been bound together.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

No doubt. But with them the rift began long ago, and the complete severance was easier than one would have thought. He understands that after all that has happened he could not return home, even if it had been open to him to do so.

KARENIN.

Why?

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

After his disgusting conduct? He swore it should never never happen again, and he gave his word that if it did he would voluntarily resign all claims on his wife, and give her back her entire freedom.

KARENIN.

How can a wife tied by the marriage bond be given back her freedom?

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

She can be made free by a divorce. He has agreed to a divorce, and we shall insist on it.

KARENIN.

But Elizaveta Andreevna loved him so deeply —

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

Her love has been so terribly tried that there is hardly anything left of it. Drinking, gambling, unfaithfulness — what love could bear with such a husband?

KARENIN.

True love holds in spite of all.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

You say: love. But who could love a man like that? He was perfectly unreliable; there was no depending on him in anything. You know the last thing that happened (*looking back at the door, and finishing quickly what she had to say.*) Their situation was absolutely critical, everything was pawned — they had nothing to meet the most necessary expenses. At last his uncle sent two thousand roubles due as interest. He takes that money and disappears, leaving his wife alone with the sick

baby, waiting for him; and then comes a note, asking to have his clothes and things sent after him.

KARENIN.

Yes, I know.

SASHA *and* LISA *come in together.*

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

Victor Mikhailovich does come, you see, when you send for him.

KARENIN.

I would have come sooner, but I was detained (*he shakes hands with the sisters.*)

LISA.

Thank you so much. I have a great service to ask you. There is no one else I could turn to.

KARENIN.

Anything I can do, I will.

LISA.

You know all about this, don't you?

KARENIN.

Yes, I know.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

Then I will leave you to yourselves. (*To* SASHA.) Come with me. We shall be in the way.

(ANNA PAVLOVNA *and* SASHA *go out.*)

LISA.

Well, he has written to me saying it's all over between us. I (*restraining her tears.*) was so hurt that —. Anyhow, I agreed to separate. I have answered that I am willing to part, as he wishes it.

KARENIN.

And now you are sorry for having said so?

LISA.

Yes. I feel I ought not to have accepted. I cannot.— Anything, but not to part with him. Now, give him that letter. Please, Victor, give him the letter and tell him.— Bring him back!

KARENIN (*surprised.*)

Well, but —

LISA.

Say I ask him to forget all that has happened, and to come back. Of course I could send him the letter. But I know him so well: his first impulse,

as always, would be a good one; but then somebody else's influence would come in, and he would change his mind and do the contrary of what he really wished.

KARENIN.

I will do what I can.

LISA.

You are surprised at my asking *you* to help me?

KARENIN.

No — well, yes, to tell the truth; yes, I am surprised.

LISA.

But not angry?

KARENIN.

How can I be angry with you?

LISA.

I asked *you* because I know you love him.

KARENIN.

Him, and you. You know that. And you know that I love you for yourself alone, not for anything I may hope from you. Thank you for trusting me. I will do all I can.

LISA.

I know you will. I will tell you everything. I called to-day at Afremov's to ask if they knew where he was. They told me that he had gone to the gipsies. I am in terrible anxiety. I am so afraid of his passion for them. If he is not restrained in time, it will enslave him again. It must be prevented. You will look for him?

KARENIN.

I'll go at once.

LISA.

Go. Find him, and tell him I've forgotten everything and am waiting for him.

KARENIN (*rising.*)

But where shall I go to find him?

LISA.

He is at the gipsies'. I went to the place myself. I went to the door.—I was just going to send in the letter, but then I thought I had better not, and decided to ask you. Here is the address. Tell him that he is to come back as if nothing had happened; that I have forgotten everything. Do it out of love for him, and out of friendship for us.

KARENIN.

I will do everything I can. (*He bows to her and goes out.*)

LISA (*alone.*)

I cannot, I cannot. Anything but — I cannot!
(*Enter* SASHA.)

SASHA.

Well, have you asked him?

LISA (*nods.*)

SASHA.

And he was willing to go?

LISA.

Of course.

SASHA.

But why did you ask *him* to do it? I can't understand.

LISA.

Whom else could I ask?

SASHA.

But you know that he is in love with you.

LISA.

That is a thing of the past. And whom else

would you have me ask? Tell me: you think he will come back?

SASHA.

I am sure he will. He —

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

(*coming back.*) Where is Victor Mikhailovich?

LISA.

Gone.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

Gone?

LISA.

I have asked him to do something for me.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

What was it? Another secret?

LISA.

No secret at all. I simply asked him to take a letter to Fedia.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

To Fedia? To Fedor Vasilievich?

LISA.

Yes, to Fedia.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

I thought it was all over between you.

LISA.

I cannot part from him.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

What! The same old story beginning again?

LISA.

I wanted to: I tried hard, but I can't. I'll do anything you like, but I can't part from him.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

You don't mean you want him to come back?

LISA.

Yes, I do.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

To have that wretch again in your house!

LISA.

Mother, I wish you would not talk about my husband like that.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

He was your husband, but he is so no more.

LISA.

He is my husband.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

A spendthrift, a drunkard, a rake — and you cannot part from him.

LISA.

Why do you torture me? I am wretched enough as it is. You are so inconsiderate —

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

That is how you take it. I torture you, do I? Very well. Then I had better go. I cannot stand it.

(LISA *keeps silent.*)

I see; I am in your way, and you want me to go. I can only say I am disgusted. I don't understand you, or what you want. You are wholly unreliable. One moment you decide to leave your husband, the next you send for the man who is in love with you.

LISA.

Nothing of the kind.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

You know that Karenin proposed to you, and

now you send him to bring back your husband. Do you simply want to make him jealous?

LISA.

Mother! how abominable! Do leave me in peace, can't you?

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

Turn out your mother, do; and welcome your depraved husband. No, no; I won't wait for you to do it. I shall go at once. And you can do whatever you choose. (*She goes out, banging the door.*)

LISA.

(*dropping into a chair.*) That, too!

SASHA.

Don't worry. That will be all right. We will make peace with mother.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

(*crossing the room.*) Duniasha, my bag!

SASHA.

Listen, mother!

(*She follows her mother out of the room looking significantly at* LISA.)

SCENE II

A room at the gipsies'. Gipsies sing "Kanavella."

(FEDIA *is lying on the sofa, his face down; he has taken off his coat.*

AFREMOV *is sitting astride on a chair, facing the leader of the gipsy singers.*

An OFFICER *sits at the table, on which are standing bottles of champagne and glasses. At his side sits a* MUSICIAN *taking down the songs.*)

AFREMOV.

You asleep, Fedia?

FEDIA.

(*rising.*) Shut up! Now then, "Not the evening hour."

GIPSY.

Not yet, Fedor Vasilievich. Let Masha sing a song first.

FEDIA.

All right. And after that, "Not the evening hour." (*He lies down again.*)

OFFICER.

Let's have "The fatal hour!"

GIPSY.

(*to* AFREMOV.) Shall she sing that?

AFREMOV.

I don't mind.

OFFICER.

(*to the* MUSICIAN.) Have you got it right?

MUSICIAN.

It's impossible to take it down correctly. Each time the tune changes somehow. And they seem to have a different scale. Now, here. (*He calls to a gipsy woman.*) How is this? (*Humming the tune.*) Is this right?

GIPSY WOMAN.

Quite right. Splendid.

FEDIA.

(*rising.*) He won't get it right on paper, and even if he does, and then shovels it into an opera, he'll make it seem absolutely rotten. Well, Masha, fire away! Anything will do: "The fatal hour," if you like. Take the guitar. (*He rises, sits down facing her, and looks in her eyes.*)

(MASHA *sings.*)

FEDIA.

That's wonderful. And you're wonderful too, Masha! Now then, "Not the evening hour."

AFREMOV.

Wait a moment. Let's have my funeral song first.

OFFICER.

Funeral? What's that?

AFREMOV.

Why, when I die. . . . Really die, you know; when I am lying in the coffin, the gipsies will come . . . I shall give directions to my wife in my will, you know. And then, when they begin singing their "Shol-me-wersta," I shall jump out of the coffin, don't you know. That is the song you ought to note down. Now then, start in!

(*The* GIPSIES *sing.*)

AFREMOV.

What do you say to that? Eh? And now, "Love, my dear ones."

(*The* GIPSIES *sing.*)

(AFREMOV *dances to the tune. The* GIPSIES, *smiling, go on singing and beat the measure.*

AFREMOV *sits down. The song ends.*)

GIPSY.

I say, Mikhail Andreevich, you dance like a true gipsy.

FEDIA.

And now, "Not the evening hour."

(*The* GIPSIES *sing.*)

That's it. That is the song. Wonderful! And how does it all happen? What is it all about? Wonderful, wonderful! To think that man can reach such ecstasy and then — nothing more; nothing further — we can achieve nothing with it!

MUSICIAN.

(*taking notes.*) Yes, it is very original.

FEDIA.

Original is not the word. It is the real thing.

AFREMOV.

Well, Pharaoh's tribe, take a rest. (*He takes a guitar, and sits down at the side of the gipsy girl* KATIA.)

MUSICIAN.

It is very simple, on the whole, but there's something queer about the rhythm.

FEDIA.

(*with a gesture, comes near* MASHA *and sits down on the sofa close to her.*) O Masha, Masha, you turn my soul inside out.

MASHA.

Well? What is it I asked you for?

FEDIA.

What? Money. (*He takes money out from his trousers' pockets.*) There, take it.

(MASHA *laughs, takes the money, and hides it in her bodice.*)

FEDIA.

(*to the* GIPSIES.) Incomprehensible creature! She unlocks the gates of heaven for me! And then all she asks for is — money! In the devil's name, do you understand yourself what you are doing?

MASHA.

I don't know what there is to understand. I

understand that if I care for some one I do my best to please him, and I sing for him better than for all the rest.

FEDIA.

Do you care for me?

MASHA.

You know how much.

FEDIA.

You — marvel! (*Kisses her.*)

(*The* GIPSIES, MEN and WOMEN, *leave the room. A few couples remain:* AFREMOV *with* KATIA, *the* OFFICER *with another girl,* GASHA. *The* MUSICIAN *writes. A gipsy plays a waltz on the guitar very softly.*)

FEDIA.

I am a married man. And you belong to your gipsy troupe. They would not let you —

MASHA.

My heart and the troupe have nothing to do with one another. If I love a man, I love him no matter what comes. Or if I hate a man, I hate him, and no help for it.

FEDIA.

I am happy! I am happy! And you — are you happy?

MASHA.

I'm always happy when nice visitors come, and then we all have fun.

GIPSY.

(*entering, to* FEDIA.) A gentleman is asking for you.

FEDIA.

What gentleman?

GIPSY.

Don't know. He is well dressed. Sable fur coat.

FEDIA.

Rich? Well, ask him in.

AFREMOV.

Who can it be wants to see you here?

FEDIA.

The devil knows. Who can want me!

(KARENIN *comes in looking round the room.*)

FEDIA.

Victor! You are the last man I would have expected. Take off your coat. What wind has blown you here? Sit down. They will sing "Not the evening hour" for you.

KARENIN.

Je voudrais vous parler sans témoine.

FEDIA.

What about?

KARENIN.

Je viens de chez vous. Votre femme m'a chargée de cette lettre, et puis —

FEDIA.

(*takes the letter, reads, frowns, then smiles affectionately.*) Listen, Karenin; you know, I dare say, what that letter contains?

KARENIN.

I know. And I want to tell you —

FEDIA.

Wait, wait. Don't imagine, please, that I am drunk, and that my words are unaccountable — I mean, that I am unaccountable. I am drunk, but

my head is quite clear about this. But what have you been told to tell me?

KARENIN.

Your wife has asked me to find you, and to say that she is waiting for you. She begs you to forget everything, and to come back.

FEDIA.

(*listens silently, looking into his eyes.*) I still don't understand. Why have you? . . .

KARENIN.

Elizaveta Andreeva sent for me, and asked me —

FEDIA.

Then —

KARENIN.

But it is not so much in your wife's name as on my own behalf that I implore you to come home with me!

FEDIA.

You're a better man than I am. What a ridiculous way to put it! It's not hard to be better than me: I'm a scoundrel, and you are a good man. That's why I won't go back on my decision. And not only because of that. I simply cannot, and will not. How could I go back?

KARENIN.

Come to me first. I will tell her you have come back, and to-morrow —

FEDIA.

Well — to-morrow? To-morrow I shall be just what I am now, and she will be the same as she is. (*He goes to the table and drinks.*) Better have the tooth straight out. I told her that if I didn't keep my word, she was to leave me. I did not keep it, and there's an end of it.

KARENIN.

For you, but not for her.

FEDIA.

It's very extraordinary that you should take so much trouble to prevent our marriage from being broken up.

(KARENIN *is about to say something, when* MASHA *enters.*)

FEDIA.

(*interrupting him.*) Now just hear her sing "The Flax." Masha, sing for him.

(*The* GIPSIES *gradually return to the room.*)

MASHA.

(*whispering.*) We ought to give him a cheer.

FEDIA.

(*laughing.*) Give him a cheer! Three cheers for Victor Mikhailovich!

(*The* GIPSIES *sing, cheering* KARENIN.)

KARENIN.

(*listens, somehow confused. To* FEDIA.) How much ought I to give them?

FEDIA.

Give them twenty-five roubles.

(KARENIN *gives the money, then quietly leaves the room.*)

There, that's good. Now "The Flax." (*Looking round.*) Hullo! Karenin has vanished. Devil take him!

(*The* GIPSIES *disperse.*)

FEDIA.

(*sitting down close to* MASHA.) You know who that was?

MASHA.

I heard the name.

FEDIA.

He is an excellent fellow. He came to fetch me home, to my wife. She loves me, and that is how I behave, fool that I am!

MASHA.

You're wrong. You ought to have pity on her.

FEDIA.

You think so? I don't.

MASHA.

Of course, if you don't love her, you oughtn't to.

FEDIA.

How do you know that?

MASHA.

Maybe I know.

FEDIA.

Give me a kiss. Now, "The Flax," and then let us stop.

(*The* GIPSIES *sing.*)

FEDIA.

Wonderful! Wonderful! Oh, never to wake up! To die like that without waking!

ACT II

SCENE I

Two weeks have elapsed. *At* LISA'S. (KARENIN and ANNA PAVLOVNA *are sitting in the dining-room.* SASHA *enters from the inner door.*)

KARENIN.

Well?

SASHA.

The doctor says all danger is over now. The only thing is to prevent the child taking cold.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

Poor Lisa is quite exhausted with all this anxiety.

SASHA.

He says it is a sort of slight angina. What is that? (*She points to a basket.*)

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

Grapes. Victor brought them.

KARENIN.

Would you like to have some?

SASHA.

Lisa like grapes. She has become so nervous of late.

KARENIN.

She has not slept these two nights, nor eaten anything.

SASHA.

(*smiling.*) Neither have you.

KARENIN.

That is quite another thing.

DOCTOR.

(*entering with* LISA, *importantly.*) As I told you: change the compress every half-hour, if the child is not asleep. If he is asleep, don't disturb him. No painting the throat. Keep the room warm, and —

LISA.

And if he has another fit of choking?

DOCTOR.

He won't. But, anyhow, if it happens, spray his throat. Then there are the powders to give him. One the first thing in the morning, another at night. I will write the prescription.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

Won't you have some tea, doctor?

DOCTOR.

No, thanks. My patients are waiting for me. (*He sits down at the table.* SASHA *brings him paper and ink.*)

LISA.

Then you are quite sure it's not croup?

DOCTOR.

(*smiling.*) Quite sure. (*He writes.*)

KARENIN.

(*to* LISA.) Have some tea now. And the best thing will be for you to go and rest. Look what you are like!

LISA.

I breathe again now. But it's your doing. You are a true friend. (*Presses his hand.* SASHA *steps aside, visibly annoyed.*) I thank you, my dear friend. This is a case when a friend —

KARENIN.

I have not done anything. You have nothing to thank me for.

LISA.

Who was it who had no sleep for two nights? Who brought the very best doctor?

KARENIN.

My reward is that the child is out of danger. And I am still more rewarded by your kindness — your extreme kindness.

(*They again shake hands and he smiles, showing the money that she has left in his hand.*)

LISA.

(*smiling.*) That is the doctor's fee. I never know how to give it to him.

KARENIN.

Nor do I.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

What is it you don't know how to do?

LISA.

How to pay the doctor. He saved what to me is more than my life, and I have to repay it with money. There is something so unpleasant in the idea.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

Leave that to me. I will do it all right. There's no difficulty whatever.

DOCTOR.

(*rises and hands the prescription.*) Dissolve each powder in a tablespoonful of boiled water, stir it and . . . (*he continues to give his directions to* LISA, *while* KARENIN *sits at the table drinking tea.* ANNA PAVLOVNA *and* SASHA *step forward.*)

SASHA.

I can't stand the way they talk to each other! She behaves as if she were in love with him.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

I should not wonder if she were.

SASHA.

It's perfectly disgusting!

(*The* DOCTOR *shakes hands with the family, and goes out.* ANNA PAVLOVNA *follows him to the hall.*)

LISA.

(*to Karenin.*) He is such a sweet child. The moment he felt better, he began to smile and to

babble. I will go to him. But I am sorry to leave you.

KARENIN.

Have some tea first. Eat something.

LISA.

I don't want anything. I feel so relieved now all this anxiety is over. (*She sobs.*)

KARENIN.

You see how exhausted you are!

LISA.

I am so happy. Will you come along with me to see the child?

KARENIN.

With pleasure.

LISA.

Then come.

(*They go out together.*)

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

(*entering from the hall. To* SASHA.) Why do you look so gloomy? I handed him the money all right, and he took it quite simply.

SASHA.

I think it's odious of her! She's taken him to the nursery. Just as if he were engaged to her — or her husband!

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

What difference does it make to you? Do you want to marry him yourself, I wonder?

SASHA.

To marry that sign-post! I would marry any one sooner than him. Nothing of the sort ever entered my head. I simply feel disgusted that, after Fedia, she should be making up to a stranger.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

He is not a stranger. They have been friends since they were children.

SASHA.

They're in love — I can see they are, by the way they smile and make eyes at each other.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

No wonder. He's been such a help now, all during the baby's illness — so full of sympathy! He did all he could, and she is grateful to him.

I see no harm in her being in love with Victor and marrying him.

SASHA.

It would be odious, disgusting! Simply disgusting!

(KARENIN *and* LISA *come in again.* KARENIN *takes leave without speaking.* SASHA *agitatedly leaves the room.*)

LISA.

(*to her mother.*) What is the matter with Sasha?

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

I don't know, I'm sure.

(LISA *sighs.*)

SCENE II

In AFREMOV'S *study. Glasses full of wine are on the table.*

(*Among the guests are* AFREMOV; FEDIA; STAKHOV, *a man with a full beard, long hair;* BUTKEVICH, *who is clean shaven;* KOROTKOV, *Afremov's toady.*)

KOROTKOV.

And I tell you, he can't win. La Belle-Bois is the best horse in Europe. I bet you she is.

STAKHOV.

Shut up, old chap. You know nobody believes what you say, and nobody will take your bet.

KOROTKOV.

I tell you your Kartouche will be beaten.

AFREMOV.

Don't quarrel. Let me settle the point for you. Ask Fedia. You can depend upon his judgment.

FEDIA.

They're both good horses. It all depends on the jockeys.

STAKHOV.

That jockey Gusev is a wrong 'un. He ought to be watched.

KOROTKOV.

(*shouting.*) That's not true.

FEDIA.

Look here. I'll solve the problem for you. Who won the Derby?

KOROTKOV.

I know, but that does not prove anything. It was just by accident. If Cracus hadn't been taken ill. Now, look here —

(*A* MAN-SERVANT *enters.*)

AFREMOV.

What is it?

SERVANT.

There's a lady here who wishes to speak to Fedor Vasilievich.

AFREMOV.

Who is she?

SERVANT.

I do not know. A real lady, sir.

AFREMOV.

Fedor, a lady for you.

FEDIA.

(*alarmed.*) Who is she?

AFREMOV.

He doesn't know.

SERVANT.

Shall I show her into the drawing-room, sir?

FEDIA.

Wait. I'll go and see. (*He goes out.*)

KOROTKOV.

Who can it be? Oh, of course, Mashka.

STAKHOV.

What Mashka?

KOROTKOV.

That gipsy-girl Masha. She's simply mad about him.

STAKHOV.

Nice girl she is. And how she sings!

AFREMOV.

Beautiful voice. Taniusha and she are wonderful. Last night they sang with Peter.

STAKHOV.

What luck that man has!

AFREMOV.

What? To have all the women after him? That's not much of a blessing!

KOROTKOV.

I hate these gipsy women. They're so vulgar.

BUTKEVICH.

Nonsense!

KOROTKOV.

I would give you the whole lot of them for one French woman.

AFREMOV.

Oh, you and your æsthetic views! I must go and see who the woman is. (*He follows* FEDIA *out of the room.*)

STAKHOV.

If it is Masha, bring her in. Let her sing us something. The gipsies of to-day are not up to the old level. There was a girl — Tania! A devil of a creature.

BUTKEVICH.

I expect they are just the same as they were before.

STAKHOV.

Nothing of the sort. Now they've taken to singing vulgar ballads, instead of the genuine songs they used to in the old days.

BUTKEVICH.

There are some very good ballads.

KOROTKOV.

If I will tell them what to sing; I bet you won't know whether it's a ballad or a folk-song.

STAKHOV.

Betting is Korotkov's only line of thought.

AFREMOV.

(*returning.*) The lady is not Masha, gentlemen. And she must be shown in here — there is no other place for Fedia to talk with her. Let us go to the billiard-room.

(*They all rise and leave the room.* FEDIA *and* SASHA *enter.*)

SASHA.

(*timidly.*) Fedia, forgive me if my intrusion annoys you, but for God's sake listen to what I have come to tell you. (*Her voice trembles.*)

(FEDIA *paces up and down the room.*)

SASHA.

(*She sits down, looks at him.*) Fedia, do come home!

FEDIA.

Now listen, Sasha. I understand you very

well. You are a good girl, and in your place I should do just like you — try to mend things. But if you were in my place — though it's rather odd to imagine such a delicate, sweet girl as you in it — if you were in my place, I say, you would have done just what I did — you would go, and not be in the way of somebody else.

SASHA.

In the way of somebody else? But do you imagine Lisa can live without you?

FEDIA.

Certainly, Sasha dear, she can, and she will. And she will be happy, much hapier than with me.

SASHA.

Never.

FEDIA.

You are mistaken. (*He takes her hand and holds it.*) But that is not the point. What is more important is that I cannot live the old life. If you take a piece of cardboard and bend it a hundred times, it may hold; but bend just once more and it will break. That's the way it was with Lisa and me. I cannot look into her eyes. And she cannot look in mine. Believe me. It hurts us both too much.

SASHA.

No, no!

FEDIA.

You say, No; but you know I am right.

SASHA.

I can only judge by imagining what it would be like if I were in her place, and you told me what you said just there. It would be awful for me.

FEDIA.

Yes, for you. . . .

(*An uncomfortable pause.*)

SASHA.

(*rising.*) Must it be as you say?

FEDIA.

It must.

SASHA.

Come back, Fedia! Come back!

FEDIA.

You are so kind, Sasha dear! I shall always hold you dear in my memory. . . . Good-bye, my dear. Let me kiss you. (*He kisses her on the forehead.*)

SASHA.

(*excited.*) No, I don't say good-bye for good. I don't believe it's all over. I won't believe it! Fedia . . .

FEDIA.

Listen, Sasha. But promise you will not tell anybody what I am going to tell you now. Will you give me your word?

SASHA.

I won't tell any one.

FEDIA.

Well, the truth is that, although I am her husband, the father of her child, I am nothing to her. . . . Wait, don't interrupt me. Don't imagine I am jealous. I am not. Not in the least. First of all, I should have no right to be; and then I have no reason. Victor Karenín is her old friend, and mine too. He loves her, and she loves him.

SASHA.

No.

FEDIA.

She loves him, but being an honest woman, she thinks she has no right to love anybody but her

husband. And yet she loves him, and will give way to her feelings for him when this obstacle (*pointing to himself*) is removed. And I will remove it — so that they may be happy. (*His voice shakes.*)

SASHA.

Fedia, don't talk in that way.

FEDIA.

You know quite well it is true. I shall rejoice in their happiness. It is the very best thing I could do. I shall not go back. I shall give them their freedom. Tell them that. No, don't tell them anything. And good-bye! (*He kisses her head and opens the door for her.*)

SASHA.

Fedia, how I admire you.

FEDIA.

Good-bye, good-bye!

(SASHA *goes out.*)

FEDIA.

(*alone.*) That's right, that's all right. (*He rings the bell. To the servant, who enters.*) Call your master. (*alone.*) It must be so.

FEDIA.

Let us go.

AFREMOV.

(*enters.*) Well, have you settled things?

FEDIA.

Oh, yes. In the very best way. Everything is perfect now. Where are all the others?

AFREMOV.

They're playing billiards.

FEDIA.

Let's join them, then. (*They go out.*)

ACT III

SCENE I

ANNA DMITRIEVNA KARENINA'S *boudoir. It is a room of elegant simplicity, full of all kinds of souvenirs.*

(*She is fifty years old, a grande dame who tries to look younger, and likes to interlard her conversation with French words.*)

ANNA DMITRIEVNA, VICTOR KARENIN'S *mother, is writing a letter.*

SERVANT.

(*entering.*) Prince Sergius Dmitrievich.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

Well, ask him in, of course. (*She turns and looks into a mirror, arranging her hair.*)

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

(*entering.*) I hope I am not in the way. (*Kisses her hand.*)

(*He is a well-preserved bachelor of sixty, with moustache. The dignified face of the old soldier has a very sad expression.*)

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

You know you are always welcome. And today more than ever. You got my note?

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

I did — and here I am.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

Oh, my dear friend, I begin to lose hope. He is bewitched, positively bewitched. I never thought he could be so obstinate, so heartless and

indifferent towards me. He is quite changed since that woman left her husband.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

How do matters stand now?

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

Well, he wants to marry her at all costs.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

But how about her husband?

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

He consents to be divorced.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

Oh! Is that so?

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

Victor is willing to put up with all the ugliness of the divorce court. Lawyers, evidence of guilt. . . . All this is disgusting. And he does not mind! I cannot understand it. He with his delicacy, his timidity.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

He is in love. And when a man is truly in love —

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

Yes, but in our time love was a pure friendship which lasted a lifetime. Such love I can understand and value.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

Nowadays, ideal love does not exist any more. *La possession de l'âme ne leur suffit plus.* That is a fact, and we cannot change it. But what about Victor?

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

No, he is not like the rest. But this is positively witchcraft. He is changed, I tell you. You know I called on them — he asked me to — I didn't find them at home, and I left a card. She asks if I will receive her. And to-day (*she looks at the watch*) about two — it is nearly that now — she will be here. I promised Victor to receive her, but you may imagine in what a state I am. I feel quite lost. So, true to my old habit, I have sent for you to come. I am in such need of your help!

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

You are very good.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

You will understand. You must see that her

visit means the final decision, don't you? Victor's whole future depends on it. I must either refuse my consent . . . but how can I?

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

Don't you know her at all?

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

I have never seen her. But I am afraid of her. A good woman cannot leave her husband — and such a good man too. He is Victor's friend — did you know that? He often came to us. I thought him very nice. But whatever he might be, whatever wrong he has done her, a wife ought not to leave her husband. She must bear her cross. There is one thing I can't possibly grasp: how could Victor, with his religious views, make up his mind to marry a divorced woman? I have heard him say over and over again — once quite lately to Spitzin — that divorce is not consistent with the true Christian doctrine. And now he is in favour of it. If she has been able to fascinate him to this point . . . ! I *am* afraid of her. How silly of me to talk all the time like this. I asked you to come so as to have your view of the situation. What do you think? Tell me. Have you spoken to Victor?

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

I have. And my opinion is that he loves her. He's already got into the habit of loving her, so to speak. Love has taken hold him. He is a man who opens his heart slowly — but then for good. He will never love any other woman, and he could not be happy with any other woman but her.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

And Varia Kasanzeva, who would gladly have married him! Such a nice girl, and so devoted to him!

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

You are counting your chickens before they are hatched. That's quite out of question now. I think the only thing for you is to consent, and to help him to marry.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

To marry a divorced woman! And suppose that afterwards he were to meet his wife's first husband somewhere! How can you calmly suggest such a thing! Could any mother wish to see her only son — and such a son — married like that?

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

My dear friend, it cannot be helped. Of course

it would be nicer if he married a young girl you know and you like, but he will not. Besides — imagine if he had married a gipsy girl or . . . And Lisa Protassova is a very nice woman. I have met her at my niece Nelly's. She is a very sweet, kind, loving, moral woman.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

Moral, indeed! A woman who has left her husband!

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

How unlike you to speak so! How cruel. Her husband is one of those men of whom one may say that they are their worst enemies. But certainly he is a worse enemy of his wife than of himself. He is a weak man, a perfect wreck, a drunkard. He has squandered his own fortune and all that she possessed; she has a child. And you condemn her for having left such a man. And besides, it was not she, it was he who left her.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

Oh, the ugliness of it all! And that I should have to take part in it!

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

What is it that the gospel says?

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

Yes, I know. Forgive us as we forgive those who trespass against us. But this is beyond me!

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

How could she go on living with such a man? Even if she had not loved any one else she would have had to leave him. She had to do it for her child's sake. Her husband himself, a clever and kind man when he is in his senses, advised her to leave him.

(VICTOR *comes in. He kisses his mother's hand, and shakes hands with* PRINCE ABRESKOV.)

VICTOR.

Mother, I have come to tell you that Elizaveta Andreevna will be here presently. I will tell the servant to show her in. There is only one thing I ask you. If you are still opposed to my marrying her —

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

(*interrupting him.*) Most certainly I am.

VICTOR.

(*continues frowning.*) Then don't speak about it, I beseech you! Don't inflict a refusal upon her.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

We shall not speak about that, I suppose. Anyhow, I shall not start the topic.

VICTOR.

Nor will she. I only want you to know her.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

One thing I cannot understand: how do you reconcile your wish to marry Madame Protassova, whose husband is alive, with your condemnation of divorce from the Christian point of view? You — so religious!

VICTOR.

Mother, that is cruel! Are we all so unimpeachable that, in this complex world, there is no discrepancy between our convictions and our practice? Why are you so unkind to me, mother?

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

I love you. I want you to be happy!

VICTOR.

(*to* PRINCE ABRESKOV.) Sergius Dmitrievich!

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

I don't doubt you want him to be happy. But

grey heads like ours are unable to know what passes in the minds of youth. Least of all, a mother who has her settled ideas about her son's happiness. On that point women are all alike.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

Indeed! I ought to have known you would all be against me. Of course you are free to do as you like. You are of age. But it will kill me.

VICTOR.

I do not recognise you. It is worse than cruel to talk like that.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

(*to* VICTOR.) Don't talk like that, Victor. You know that your mother does not act as she speaks.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

I shall speak exactly as I think and feel, but without hurting her feelings.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

I am quite sure of that.

SERVANT.

(*enters.*) Here she is.

VICTOR.

I'll go.

SERVANT.

Elizaveta Andreevna Protassova.

VICTOR.

I'll go, mother. I beseech you —
(PRINCE ABRESKOV *rises.*)

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

Ask the lady in. (*To* PRINCE ABRESKOV.) Don't go.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

I thought you would prefer to talk with her *tête-à-tête.*

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

No, I am afraid. (*Fussing about.*) If I want to be with her alone I will signal to you. That depends . . . But at the moment I should feel uncomfortable alone with her. When I want you to leave the room I will do like that. (*She makes a sign.*)

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

I shall know. I am sure you will like her. Only be just!

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

Oh, you are all against me!

(LISA, *in hat and visiting dress, comes into the room.*)

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

(*rising.*) I was so sorry you were not at home when I called. It is so kind of you to come to see me.

LISA.

I did not expect — thank you so much for wishing to see me.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

You have met before, I believe? (*Pointing to* PRINCE ABRESKOV.)

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

Yes, I have had the honour of making Madame Protassova's acquaintance. (*He shakes hands with* LISA. *They sit down.*) I have heard so much about you from my niece Nelly.

LISA.

We have always been great friends. (*Looking shyly at* ANNA DMITRIEVNA.) And we still are. (*To* ANNA DMITRIEVNA.) I did not expect you would want to see me.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

I knew your husband very well. He was a great friend of my son's, and often came to our

house before he left for Tambov. I believe it was there he married you?

LISA.

Yes, we were married there.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

But afterwards, when he came back to Moscow, he stopped coming to see me.

LISA.

He used hardly to go anywhere.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

And he never brought you to me.

(*An awkward silence.*)

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

The last time I saw you was at an amateur performance at Denisov's. It was a charming affair. You were acting in the play.

LISA.

No — oh, yes, I acted. I had almost forgotten. (*Pause.*) Anna Dmitrievna, forgive me if what I am going to say displeases you. But I can't pretend; I am really unable to. I came because Victor Mikhailovich told me . . . because

. . . he told me you would like to see me. . . . But it is better if you tell me. . . . (*Overpowered by tears.*) I am very unhappy, and you are kind.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

I think I had better go.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

Yes, go.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

Good-bye. (*He shakes hands with both the ladies, and goes out.*)

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

Listen, Lisa . . . I don't know your father's name — No, no, no, that doesn't matter.

LISA.

Andreevna.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

No matter. Lisa! I pity you, I sympathise with you. But I love Victor. He is all I love on earth. I know his soul as if it was my own. He is proud. He was proud even as a boy of seven. He is proud not of his name, not of riches, but proud of his purity, his high ideals. He never swerved from them. He is as pure as an innocent girl.

LISA.

I know.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

He has never loved a woman before. You are the first. I don't say I am not jealous of you — I am. Yes, I am. But we mothers — your son is still a baby, you can't know yet — we are prepared for it. I was prepared to surrender him to his future wife, and I made up my mind not to be jealous. But I expected her to be as pure as he is.

LISA.

I . . . Do you . . .

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

Forgive me. I know it is not your fault. I know you are unhappy. But I know him. Now, he is ready to bear anything, and he will bear it without ever saying a word; but he will suffer. His pride will be wounded and will suffer, and he will never be happy.

LISA.

I have thought about that.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

Lisa, dear! You are such a clever, good

woman, and if you love him you certainly want his happiness more than your own. And if so, you can't wish to bind him so that he would be sorry afterwards. He would never, oh never, say so, but he would be.

LISA.

He would not, I know. I have thought so much about it, and have asked myself what I ought to do. I have discussed it with him quite openly. But what am I to do if he says he cannot live without me? I told him, let us be friends, but don't bind up your pure life with mine, which is wretched. But he does not see it from the same standpoint.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

Of course, he would not at the moment.

LISA.

Persuade him not to marry me. I will agree. I only want his happiness, not mine. But help me! Don't hate me. Let us join in making him happy.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

I think I love you already. (*She kisses her.* LISA *bursts into tears.*) And yet it is so horrible. If only he had fallen in love with you before you married —

LISA.

He says he loved me then, but thought it wrong to stand in the way of another man's happiness.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

Oh, how unfortunate it all is! But let us love each other, and God will help us to attain what we wish.

VICTOR.

(*entering.*) Mother dear! I have heard all you have been talking about. I knew it would be so. I knew you would love her. So now everything will be all right.

LISA.

I am sorry you were listening. If I had known, I should not have spoken like that.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

But, after all, nothing is decided yet. All I can say is that I would have been very happy — if it had not been for all these sad circumstances. (*She kisses her.*)

VICTOR.

Don't change your mind, please — that is all I ask you.

SCENE II

A room in a cheap flat; a bed, writing-table, sofa are all the furniture. FEDIA *is alone. There is a knock at the door. A Woman's voice is heard outside:—*

Why have you locked yourself in, Fedor Vasilievich? Open the door, Fedia.

FEDIA.

(*opening the door.*) I am so glad you have come. I am so bored, so frightfully bored.

MASHA.

Why didn't you come to us? Drunk again?

FEDIA.

You know, I —

MASHA.

Oh, what a fool I am to love you!

FEDIA.

Masha!

MASHA.

Masha, indeed! If you cared for me the least

bit, you would have been divorced by now. They want it too — you know they do. You go on saying you don't love her, but you stick to her all the same. You don't want to be divorced. I can see that.

FEDIA.

You know why I don't.

MASHA.

Nonsense! People are perfectly right when they say there is no depending on you.

FEDIA.

What can I say? It hurts, your saying all that. You know it yourself.

MASHA.

Nothing can hurt you.

FEDIA.

You know perfectly well that my only joy in life is in your love.

MASHA.

My love is all right. But you — you don't love me.

FEDIA.

You know I do. I don't need to tell you that.

MASHA.

Then why are you so cruel to me?

FEDIA.

Cruel? I? Can you say that?

MASHA.

(*bursting into tears.*) You are so unkind!

FEDIA.

(*coming close to her and embracing her.*) Don't cry, Masha! Don't cry. Life is worth living. Why be miserable? It is so unlike you, my beautiful one!

MASHA.

You do love me?

FEDIA.

Whom else could I love?

MASHA.

Me, only me? And now read what you have written.

FEDIA.

It will bore you.

MASHA.

Anything you write must be fine.

FEDIA.

Well, listen. (*Reads.*) "Late in the autumn we decided, my friend and I, to meet at the Marigin fort. There stood a castle with small turrets. The night was dark and warm. The fog . . ."

(IVAN MAKAROVICH, *an old gipsy, and his wife,* NASTASSIA IVANOVNA — MASHA'S *parents — enter.*)

NASTASSIA IVANOVNA.

(*coming close to her daughter.*) Oh, you are here, you, cursed sheep! (*To* FEDIA.) No disrespect to you, sir. (*To* MASHA.) But you — how can you treat us like this?

IVAN MAKAROVICH.

(*to* FEDIA.) It's very wrong of you, sir, to ruin a girl. It's wrong, it's ugly.

NASTASSIA IVANOVNA.

Put on your shawl, and be gone from here. How did you dare to run away like that? What

am I to say to the others? To keep company with a beggar! He can't give you a penny.

MASHA.

I have not done anything wrong. I love Fedor Vasilievich — that is all. I'm not abandoning the others. I will sing as before. But as to —

IVAN MAKAROVICH.

Shut up, or I will pull your hair out. You ought to respect your parents, you ought.— It's wicked of you to do that, sir! We all loved you; we pitied you. How many times we used to sing to you just for nothing! And that is how you behave!

NASTASSIA IVANOVNA.

You have ruined my daughter, my only one; my darling, my pearl, my priceless treasure! Dragged her down into the mud, that's what you have done! You've got no fear of God in your heart!

FEDIA.

Nastassia Ivanovna, you are mistaken. Don't think me wicked. I consider your daughter just like my sister. I hold her honour dear. Don't be afraid. I love her, that is true. But that can't be helped.

IVAN MAKAROVICH.

Why did you not love her when you had money? You ought to have paid down ten thousand roubles to us, and then you could have had her without any disgrace. That is what all respectable men do. But to steal her away like that, after having squandered all you had! You ought to be ashamed, sir.

MASHA.

He did not take me away, I came to him. And, if you take me away from him now, I will come back. I love him — that's all. Lock me up! My love will be stronger than all your bolts. I won't obey you.

NASTASSIA IVANOVNA.

Don't be cross, Mashenka, darling. You have done wrong. Now do come with us.

IVAN MAKAROVICH.

Shut up, Masha. (*He takes her by the hand.*) Good-bye, sir.

(*All three go out together.*
PRINCE ABRESKOV *comes in.*)

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

Forgive me. I have been — quite by chance — a witness of this unpleasant incident.

FEDIA.

With whom have I the honour — (*Recognising him.*) Oh, Prince Sergius Dmitrievich!

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

I have been the witness of what has just occurred. I did not desire to hear, but as I did hear, I am bound in duty to tell you so. I was shown in — the loudness of the voices evidently drowned my repeated knocking — consequently I had to wait till your visitors were gone.

FEDIA.

Oh, that's all right. Won't you sit down? I'm obliged to you for telling me, as it gives me an opportunity to explain to you what it was all about. What you think of me does not in the least concern me. But I should tell you this girl, a young gipsy singer, has done nothing to deserve the scene you witnessed. She is as pure as a dove. And my only relations with her are friendly — friendly, and nothing more. Poetical they may be — that does not affect her purity, her honour. I am glad to have told you that. But tell me, what is it you want of me? What can I do for you?

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

I must tell you first of all —

FEDIA.

Forgive me, Prince. My position in society is now such that my having known you slightly long ago does not entitle me to a visit from you without some special reason for your wanting to see me. What is that reason?

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

You are quite right — I will not deny there is. I have come for a special reason. But I beg you to believe that whatever change there may be in your social position, it does not affect my esteem for you.

FEDIA.

I am quite sure of that.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

Well, what I have to say is that the son of my old friend, Anna Dmitrievna Karenina, and she herself, have asked me to apply directly to you in order to know what your relations are now — if you allow me to speak of the matter — with your wife, Elizaveta Andreevna Protassova.

FEDIA.

My relations with my wife, my former wife I may say, have entirely ceased.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

So I understood. And that is why I consented to come upon so delicate a mission.

FEDIA.

Let me hasten to add that the fault is not hers, but mine; in fact, my faults are endless. She remains what she always has been, the most spotless of wives and of women.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

Victor Karenin, and especially his mother, are anxious to know what you intend to do now. I am to ask you about that.

FEDIA.

(*excitedly.*) I have no intentions whatever. I leave my wife entirely free. I wish it to be understood that I will never stand in her way in anything. I know she loves Victor Karenin, and I have no objection at all. I think him rather a bore, but a perfectly nice and respectable man; and I am sure — as the saying is — that she will be happy with him. And God bless them. That is all I have to say.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

Yes, but we —

FEDIA.

(*interrupting him.*) Don't imagine I am in the least jealous. I said Victor was a bore, but I take that back. He is an excellent, an honest, and moral man — almost the exact opposite of me. He has loved her from her youth up. Perhaps she was in love with him too when she became my wife. This has been her real love, the one of which people are often not aware. And I think she never ceased to love him, though being an honest woman, she did not confess it even to herself. But it has hovered as something of a shadow over our married life. . . . No, really, I think I ought not to make such confessions to you.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

Please don't stop short of anything you can tell me. Believe me, my real object in coming to you was just to gain a clear insight into your relations with your wife. I quite understand what you mean. I see that a sort of shadow, as you have so well put it, may have existed.

FEDIA.

Yes, it existed; and perhaps that is why I was not satisfied with my life at home. I kept trying to find satisfaction elsewhere, and indulged in all

sorts of passions. Why talk about it? I must seem to you to be trying to exculpate myself, and I don't want that. Besides, there is no excuse whatever for me. I have been a bad husband. I say I *have been,* now I no longer am her husband. I consider her entirely free. That is my answer, which you may take back to them.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

That is very well, but you know the principles of Victor and his mother. His relations with Elizaveta Andreevna have been throughout most respectful and distant, and remain so now. He has tried to help her in her troubles — that is all.

FEDIA.

Yes, and my vices have only helped their intimacy to ripen. Well, I suppose it could not be helped.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

You know the strict religious principles of Victor and his mother. I don't agree with them on that point. I have broader views. But I understand and respect their feelings. I understand that he, and his mother even more than he, could not think of his union with a woman without the consecration of the church.

FEDIA.

Yes, I know how conservative he is in that respect. But what do they want? Divorce? I have already told them that I consent to be divorced. But to plead guilty, and pass through all the lies connected with the proceedings — that would be hard indeed.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

I quite agree with you. Only there is no choice left. We must manage it somehow. But, of course, you are quite right, and I understand you.

FEDIA.

(*pressing his hand.*) Thank you, my dear Prince, thank you. I always knew you were kind and just. Tell me, what ought I to do? Consider my position. I don't pretend to be better than I really am. I am a scoundrel. But there are things which I cannot do calmly. I cannot tell lies.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

I must say you are a puzzle to me. You are a gifted, a clever man, with a fine sense of moral duty. How could you have been so carried away by your passions? How could you forget what was due to yourself? How has your life come to this point? Why, why have you ruined yourself?

FEDIA.

(*mastering his tears.*) For the past ten years I have led my present dissipated life, and for the first time I find a man like you to pity me. My friends, rakes like myself, pity me, women pity me; but a clever, a kind man like you . . . ! Thank you! How have I ruined myself? In the first place — alcohol. It is not that I enjoy the taste of wine. But it prevents one thinking. When I think, or when my senses are awake, I feel that everything is different from what it ought to be, and I am ashamed. I am ashamed now in talking to you. Anything like being an official, or having a place in a bank — seems to me absolutely shameful. Well, the moment I begin to drink, my shame is gone. And then music — not operas or Beethoven, but gipsy songs — fills you with new energy, makes you live a new life. And when a pair of black eyes and a smiling face are near you — But the more entrancing it all is, the more you feel ashamed afterwards.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

And work?

FEDIA.

I have tried. No work satisfies me. But don't let us talk about me. Anyhow, I thank you with all my heart.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

Well, what answer am I to take them?

FEDIA.

Tell them I am willing to do as they wish. They want to marry, and there must be nothing in their way. That is so?

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

Yes, of course.

FEDIA.

I will see to it. Tell them I will; they may rely on me.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

When?

FEDIA.

Wait a moment — let us say they will be free in a fortnight. Will that do?

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

May I say that you give them your word?

FEDIA.

You may. Good-bye, Prince. Thank you once more.

(PRINCE ABRESKOV *goes out.*)

FEDIA.

(*sits a long while silent, then smiles.*) Good, good! That's right. That's right. Very good indeed.

ACT IV

SCENE I

A private room in a restaurant. FEDIA *is shown in by a* WAITER.

WAITER.

This way, sir. You will be all by yourself; no one will disturb you. I will bring you some paper at once.

IVAN PETROVICH ALEXANDROV.

(*appearing in the doorway.*) Protassov, do you mind if I come in?

FEDIA.

(*very serious.*) You may, if you like. But I am busy, and — All right, come in.

IVAN PETROVICH.

You are going to write an answer to their demands. I will tell you what you ought to tell

them. Don't you spare them. To say straight out what you mean, and to act resolutely; that's my system.

FEDIA.

(*to the waiter.*) A bottle of champagne.

(*The* WAITER *goes out.*)

FEDIA.

(*taking a revolver out of his pocket and putting it on the table.*) Wait a bit.

IVAN PETROVICH.

What's that? Going to shoot yourself? Of course! Why not? I understand you. They mean to humiliate you, and you will show them who you are — put a bullet through your head and crush them by your magnanimity. I understand you. I understand everything and everybody, because I am a genius.

FEDIA.

Yes, of course. But —

(*The* WAITER *returns with ink and paper.*)

FEDIA.

(*putting a napkin over the revolver.*) Open the bottle. (*The* WAITER *opens the bottle, then*

goes.) Let us have a drink first. (*They drink.* FEDIA *sits down and begins to write a letter.*) Wait a moment.

IVAN PETROVICH.

I drink to your — great journey. I am above that. I won't try to dissuade you. Life and death are all the same to me. I die in life, and I live in death. You want to kill yourself, so that those two may be sorry for it and miss you badly. And I — I will kill myself for the world to realise what it has lost. I won't hesitate; I won't consider and reconsider it. I will just take the revolver (*snatching the revolver from the table.*) One, two — and all will be over. But the right moment has not yet come. (*He puts the revolver back.*) And why should I instruct them? They ought to understand things by themselves. Oh, you. . . .

FEDIA.

(*writing.*) Wait a moment.

IVAN PETROVICH.

Contemptible creatures, who fuss about and understand nothing! Nothing whatever! I'm not speaking to you — I'm only expressing my thoughts to myself. And what is it that humanity is in need of? Not much; only to prize its gen-

iuses instead of persecuting them as it does, and making their life a perpetual agony. No; I won't be your plaything any more. I will denounce you all, hypocrites that you are!

FEDIA.

(*having finished his letter, drinks a glass of champagne, and reads what he has written.*) Now please, go!

IVAN PETROVICH.

Go? All right, I'll go. Anyhow, I don't hold you back from what you have decided to do. I shall do so too. But the time has not yet come. I only wanted to tell you —

FEDIA.

All right, you can tell me later. Now listen: will you, please, give this to the manager (*handing him some money*), and ask him for a letter and a parcel that have probably been sent here in my name? Will you do that?

IVAN PETROVICH.

I will. Then you promise to wait for me? I will tell you something very important, something the like of which you will not hear, neither in this world nor in that to come — at least, not till I get there. Am I to give him all this money?

FEDIA.

Let him take what I owe him.

(IVAN PETROVICH *goes out.*)

FEDIA.

(*sighs with a sense of relief, locks the door, takes the revolver, cocks it, puts it close to his temple, then shivers, and lets his hand drop with great precaution. Groans.*) No, I cannot, I cannot!

(*There is a knock at the door.*)

Who is there?

MASHA'S *voice outside.*

It is I.

FEDIA.

Who: "I?" Oh, Masha! (*He opens the door.*)

MASHA.

(*entering.*) I called at your place, then at Poppov's, at Afremov's, and then I thought, at last, I might find you here. (*Seeing the revolver.*) Ah, what's that? You fool! You regular fool! Could you really —

FEDIA.

No, I could *not.*

MASHA.

And I? Am I something to you or not? You

heartless wretch! You have no pity for me! It is a great sin, Fedor Vasilievich, to treat me like that. A great sin! That is what I get now for all my love!

FEDIA.

I wanted to release them. I promised to. And I can't tell lies.

MASHA.

And what about me?

FEDIA.

Oh, you! You would have felt it a deliverance too. Is it better for you to go on being so miserable on account of me?

MASHA.

Of course it is. I cannot live without you.

FEDIA.

And with me your life is no life at all. When I was dead, you would have cried over me, but after a while you would feel much the better for my loss.

MASHA.

I shouldn't have cried at all. The devil may take you for all I care, if you have no pity for me. (*She bursts into tears.*)

FEDIA.

Masha, darling! I only thought it would have been better.

MASHA.

Better for you, I dare say.

FEDIA.

(*smiling.*) Why for me? I was going to kill myself.

MASHA.

It's just selfishness, that's all. But I wish I knew what you wanted.

FEDIA.

What? A great many things.

MASHA.

Well, what?

FEDIA.

First of all, I must keep my promise. All alone, this is too much for me. How can I tell lies? How can I stand all the ugliness of the divorce? How can I?

MASHA.

There you are right. It is ugly. I myself —

FEDIA.

And then they have to be delivered in some way or other. No doubt of that. My wife and he must be free. They are kind, good people, both of them. Why must they suffer? That is my second reason.

MASHA.

I don't think she's as kind as that, if she has forsaken you.

FEDIA.

It was all my fault, not hers.

MASHA.

Your fault, indeed! Everything is your fault — of course, she is an angel. Well, what else is there?

FEDIA.

Well, this. You are a good girl — yes, you are. And if I live, I shall make you miserable.

MASHA.

That is no concern of yours. I am lost anyhow. I know that.

FEDIA.

(*sighing.*) And the chief, the very chief reason, lies in myself. You think I don't see that I am

good for nothing, a burden to everybody and to myself too, as your father said. I am no good.

MASHA.

Nonsense! You won't get me to leave you. I shall stick to you, and there is an end of it. And as to your leading a bad life, drinking and smoking — you are a living soul. Change; give it all up.

FEDIA.

It's easy for you to say it.

MASHA.

Do as I say.

FEDIA.

When I look at your face, I think I could do everything you ask me.

MASHA.

And you will. You will do it all. (*She sees the letter.*) What is that? You've written to them. What have you said?

FEDIA.

I wrote what I had to. (*He takes the letter, is about to tear it.*) Now it is of no use.

MASHA.

(*snatching the letter from him.*) You've written that you were going to kill yourself? Did you say you would shoot yourself, or just kill yourself, without saying how?

FEDIA.

I've written that I won't live any longer.

MASHA.

Give me that letter. Have you read the famous novel, "What are We to Do?"

FEDIA.

I think I have.

MASHA.

It's not an entertaining book, I must say, but one thing I liked in it. Do you remember that man — what is his name? Ramanov — who made-believe he was drowned? You can't swim, can you?

FEDIA.

No.

MASHA.

Very good, then. Give me your coat. Give me your notebook, and all those things.

FEDIA.

What an idea!

MASHA.

No, wait. Let us go home, and you will put on other clothes.

FEDIA.

But that will be a fraud.

MASHA.

Let it be a fraud. You went to have a bathe in the river; you left your clothes on the bank. The notebook and this letter will be found in your pocket.

FEDIA.

And then?

MASHA.

Then? Then we'll clear out, and will begin a new and happy life.

IVAN PETROVICH.

(*returning.*) I say! May I take the revolver?

MASHA.

Yes, take it. We are off.

SCENE II

The drawing-room at LISA PROTASSOVA'S.

KARENIN.

He promised so definitely that I was sure he would keep his word.

LISA.

I feel ashamed to say it, but really, hearing of that gipsy girl has made me feel quite free from him. Don't think I was jealous. No, I simply felt free. And — I don't know how to put it into words, Victor Mikhailovich —

KARENIN.

(*smiling.*) Why do you speak to me in that formal way?

LISA.

Well then, Victor. But don't interrupt me. I want to tell you exactly how I feel. What distressed me most of all was that I somehow felt I loved two men at the same time. It seemed to me so wicked, so frightfully immoral.

KARENIN.

Immoral! You immoral!

LISA.

But since I have come to know that there was another woman he loved, and that he has no more need of me, I feel quite free. I know now that I can tell you truly that I love you, and you alone. Now my mind is perfectly clear. I only suffer from my position. This divorce is so awful. And how agonising to wait for it!

KARENIN.

All that will be over presently. He has promised to do all that is necessary; and besides, I asked the secretary of the Synod to call on him with the petition, and not to go before he has signed it. If I did not know him as well as I do, I should have thought he was dragging the whole business out on purpose.

LISA.

Oh no, indeed he is not. It is only that he is so weak and so honest. He was always so. He hates saying what is untrue. But I am sorry you have sent him money. You ought not to have done that.

KARENIN.

I had to. Want of money for expenses would have meant further delay.

LISA.

Yes, but it is so unpleasant.

KARENIN.

I don't think he has any right to be fastidious.

LISA.

What egoists we are becoming.

KARENIN.

That is true — but then, it is partly your fault. You made me wait so long, you have driven me to such despair, that now I can't help saying how happy I am. Happiness is very selfish. That is your fault, darling.

LISA.

Do you think it is only you who feel happy? I do too. I am full of bliss, overwhelmed by it. Now my boy has recovered, and your mother is fond of me, and you — and what makes my greatest joy — I love you so dearly.

KARENIN.

Do you? You won't have any regrets? You won't go back on your decision?

LISA.

No. Ever since that day I have been a changed being.

KARENIN.

You won't change back again?

LISA.

Never, never. My only wish is that you should forget the past as completely as I have done.

(*The* NURSE *enters with the boy, who goes to his mother. She takes him on her knees.*)

KARENIN.

What a miserable thing man's nature is!

LISA.

Why do you say that? (*She kisses the child.*)

KARENIN.

When you married, and I heard about it on my return from abroad and was so unhappy because I had lost you, it was at least a great joy to learn that you just remembered me. That was enough for me. After that, when we became friends and

you were kind to me — when I felt that there was just a spark of something more than mere friendship in our relations — I was almost happy. I was only afraid — and I suffered from it a good deal — that it was unfair to Fedia. But as I was firmly convinced there could not be anything more than pure friendship between me and the wife of my friend — and besides, I knew what you were — I was not greatly disturbed. On the whole I was content. Then, when Fedia began to cause you so much trouble, and I felt that I was your support and that you somehow feared my friendship, I was completely happy, and a vague hope arose in my soul. And when Fedia became quite impossible and you resolved to leave him, when I told you for the first time I loved you and you did not say "No," but left me in tears, then my happiness was complete. If anybody had asked me then what I desired more, I should have answered, Nothing. But after that, the possibility arose of uniting my life with yours; my mother grew fond of you, my hope began to be realised. You told me you loved me before, and you go on loving me; now you say he does not exist for you and you love only me — what else could I wish? But no, just now I suffer because of the past. I wish it had not existed, I wish there were nothing that could remind me of him.

LISA.

(*reproachfully.*) O Victor!

KARENIN.

Forgive me, Lisa. If I tell you all this, it is because I ought not to have a thought that I hide from you. I tell you to show you how bad I am; to show you that I know I must overcome such feelings. And I have already overcome them. I love him.

LISA.

I am so glad. I did all I could. And I can't help it if my heart underwent the change that you longed for. There is nothing left in it — except you.

KARENIN.

Nothing but me?

LISA.

Nothing. Or else I would not say so.

SERVANT.

(*entering.*) Mr. Vosnessensky.

KARENIN.

Oh, he must have Fedia's answer.

LISA.

(*to* KARENIN.) Ask him in.

(*The* SERVANT *goes out.*)

KARENIN.

(*rising and going to the door.*) You see, the answer has come at once.

LISA.

(*passing the child to the* NURSE.) I can hardly believe, Victor, that it will be settled as we wish.

(*She kisses the child.* NURSE *takes it away.*)

(VOSNESSENSKY *enters.*)

KARENIN.

Well?

VOSNESSENSKY.

He was not in.

KARENIN.

Not in? Then the petition is not yet signed?

VOSNESSENSKY.

No; it is not. But there is a letter from him, addressed to you and Elizaveta Andreevna. (*He takes a letter out of his pocket and gives it*

to KARENIN.) I called at his house, and was told that he had gone to a restaurant. They gave me the address. I went there and found Fedor Vasilievich, who asked me to call for the answer in an hour. I called and —

KARENIN.

This is too bad! He is trying again to gain time by inventing all sorts of excuses. How low he has sunk!

LISA.

Read the letter. What does he say?

(KARENIN *opens the letter.*)

VOSNESSENSKY.

Do you want me any more?

KARENIN.

No. Good-bye. I thank you for — (*He stops in the middle of the sentence, amazed by what he reads in the letter.*)

(VOSNESSENSKY *goes out.*)

LISA.

What is the matter? What is in that letter?

KARENIN.

Horrible! Horrible!

LISA.

(*rushing to seize the letter.*) Read it to me!

KARENIN.

(*reading.*) "Lisa and Victor, I write to you both. I am not going to lie, and call you 'dear' and the like. I cannot master a feeling of bitterness; I cannot help reproaching — not you, of course, but myself — when I think of you, of your love, your happiness. And I am wretched, because that is an accusation of myself. I know Victor. I know that, in spite of my being the husband, it is I who am the intruder. I stood in your way, I am the cause of all your troubles. And yet I cannot help feeling bitter and disliking both of you. At a distance I love you both, particularly Lisa, darling Lisa — but when I think of you closely, I feel worse than indifferent. I know I am wrong, but I cannot change."

LISA.

What is all that for?

KARENIN.

(*continuing.*) "But all this is not to the point. What I am going to tell you is this: a change in my feelings has made me fulfil your wish in a dif-

ferent way from what you desired. To lie, to act a disgusting comedy, to bribe the consistory officials — the ugliness of all that is distasteful to me. I am a bad man myself, but not in that way. I cannot be a party to such low, dirty tricks. I simply am *unable* to. The other issue on which I have decided is the very simplest: you must marry — that is the only way for you to be happy. I am in your way — consequently, I must disappear."

LISA.

(*snatching* KARENIN'S *hand.*) Victor!

KARENIN.

(*reading.*) "I must disappear. And so I will. When this letter reaches you I shall be no more. P.S.— I am sorry you have sent me money for divorce expenses. This is unpleasant, and unlike you. But that cannot be mended now. I have done so many shabby things in my life; well, now it's your turn for once in a way. The money shall be sent back to you. The way I have found to settle things is much shorter and cheaper, and it is the surest one. I ask you only not to be angry with me, and not to think badly of me. And there is one thing more: I know a poor man, the watchmaker Eugene. Could you help him? He is a

weak man, but very honest and good. Good-bye. Fedia."

LISA.

He has killed himself!

KARENIN.

(*rings the bell and runs to the hall.*) Ask Mr. Vosnessensky to come back.

LISA.

I knew that would be the end. Fedia! Fedia darling!

KARENIN.

Lisa!

LISA.

It is not true I ceased to love him! I love him alone, and nobody else. And I have brought him to his end. Leave me alone!

(VOSNESSENSKY *returns.*)

KARENIN.

Where is Fedor Vasilievich? What did they tell you?

VOSNESSENSKY.

They told me he had gone out in the morning, leaving this letter, and had not come back.

In the Restaurant.

KARENIN.

I must find out. I leave you, Lisa.

LISA.

Don't be angry with me. I can't lie either. Leave me now. Try, try to find out.

ACT V

SCENE I

A dirty room in a cheap restaurant.

(*People are sitting around the table, drinking tea and vodka. Near the front a small table, at which is sitting* FEDIA. *He is in rags, and has fallen very low. By his side is* PETUSHKOV, *a delicate, keen-faced man, with long hair, spiritual face. Both are slightly tipsy.*)

PETUSHKOV.

I quite understand. This is real love. Well, go on.

FEDIA.

Of course we could expect a girl of our class to feel like that, to sacrifice everything for the man

she loves. But this girl is a gipsy, educated to care only for money and to squeeze it out of every one. And yet she has this pure disinterested love. She gives everything without asking for anything in return. It's the contrast of it that strikes me most.

PETUSHKOV.

Yes, that's what we painters call "les valeurs." To produce the exact impression of scarlet, you must have green round it. Well, that is not the point. I understand.

FEDIA.

The only good I have done in life is that I have not taken advantage of her love. And do you know why?

PETUSHKOV.

Was it because you pitied her?

FEDIA.

No, no. I did not pity her. But I had a sort of admiration for her. And when she used to sing — oh, how wonderfully she sang, and probably sings now! — not only then, but always, I looked up to her. I have not ruined her life, simply because I loved her truly. And now she is simply a dear, a very dear memory to me. (*He drinks.*)

PETUSHKOV.

I understand. You are a true idealist.

FEDIA.

Now listen. I have had other passions in my life. Once I was very much in love with a pretty woman — basely, vilely, like a dog. She gave me a rendezvous. I did not go. And why? Because of her husband; I felt I could not behave meanly to him. The strange thing is that when I remember that I want to feel glad, and to be satisfied with myself for having behaved like an honest man; instead, I repent as if I committed a sin. With Masha it is just the contrary. I rejoice at not having polluted my love. However low I may fall, for whatever mean trifles I sell my life, though I am covered with vermin and mange, this diamond will remain untarnished, this ray of sunlight will shine for ever in my soul.

PETUSHKOV.

I understand. Where is she now?

FEDIA.

I don't know. I don't want to know. All that belongs to the past. I don't want to mix it with my present life.

(*At the table behind them a* WOMAN *screams. The* MANAGER *comes with a policeman, and they take her away.* FEDIA *and* PETUSHKOV *watch them, listen, and are silent.*)

PETUSHKOV.

(*when all is silent again.*) Yes, your life is a very wonderful one.

FEDIA.

Oh no, it is quite simple. In our class — the one in which I was born — three courses only are open to a man; the first is to go into the government service, to make money and to increase the ugliness of the life round you. This was disgusting to me, or perhaps I was simply unfit for it; but disgust was the stronger motive. The second course is to destroy the ugly conditions of life. But only heroes can do that, and I am not a hero. The third issue is to drink in order to forget, to indulge in dissipation, and to sing. That was my choice — I sang, and you see what end my singing has led me to. (*He drinks.*)

PETUSHKOV.

And marriage? Home life? I should have been happy if I had a good wife. My wife was the cause of my ruin.

FEDIA.

Home life? Oh yes, my wife was an ideal one. She is still alive. But, don't you know, there was no sparkle in her. You know how, in order to make kvass fizz, they put a currant into the bottle. Well, that currant was lacking in our life. It did not sparkle. That is why I tried to find oblivion somehow. I began to behave disgracefully. And you know, I dare say, that we love those who surround us just for the good we are doing them, and our dislikes are caused by the evil we do them. I wronged her greatly. She seemed to love me.

PETUSHKOV.

Why do you say "seemed?"

FEDIA.

I say so because she somehow could not creep into my heart, as Masha did. But I don't want to speak about that. There were times when she was going to have a baby, or when she was nursing, and I stayed away for days and came home quite drunk. Of course, that was why I loved her less and less. (*Ecstatically.*) Oh, I know, I realise it only at this very moment: the reason why I love Masha is that I did her good, and not evil.

That's it. And the other one I actually tormented, and did not love. I simply did not love her. I was jealous for a time, but that was soon over.

(A MAN *approaches,* ARTEMIEV *by name, dressed in a shabby but carefully mended coat; his moustaches are dyed, and he wears an order on his coat.*)

ARTEMIEV.

Good appetite, gentlemen. (*Bowing to* FEDIA.) You have made the acquaintance of our artist?

FEDIA.

(*coolly.*) Yes, I have.

ARTEMIEV.

(*to* PETUSHKOV.) Have you finished that portrait you were commissioned to paint?

PETUSHKOV.

No; I didn't get the commission after all.

ARTEMIEV.

(*Sitting down.*) You don't mind my sitting here with you?

(FEDIA *and* PETUSHKOV *remain silent.*)

PETUSHKOV.

Fedor Vasilievich was telling me about his life.

ARTEMIEV.

Oh, secrets? I won't disturb you. Go on. I don't want you. Pigs! (*He goes to the next table, sits down and orders beer. He listens to the talk of the other two.*)

FEDIA.

I don't like that man.

PETUSHKOV.

He is offended.

FEDIA.

I don't care. I cannot stand people like that. I know I couldn't open my mouth in his presence. It's different with you — I feel quite at my ease. Well, what was I saying?

PETUSHKOV.

You were speaking about your jealousy. How did you part with your wife?

FEDIA.

Oh, that! (*A pause.*) It is altogether a very strange story. My wife has married.

PETUSHKOV.

How's that? Are you divorced?

FEDIA.

No. (*He smiles.*) She is a widow.

PETUSHKOV.

A widow? What do you mean?

FEDIA.

I mean what I say. She is a widow. I do not exist.

PETUSHKOV.

I don't understand.

FEDIA.

Don't you? I am dead. Yes, that's it.

(ARTEMIEV *leans towards them and listens intently.*)

Well, I think I may tell *you.* It happened a long time ago; and, besides, you don't know who I really am. That is how it happened: I was making my wife totally miserable, I had squandered everything I could lay hands on; in fact, I had become intolerable. Well, a man came forward to protect my wife. Don't imagine anything wicked and mean. He was a friend of

mine, a very good man, very straightforward, the exact opposite of me. And as there is much more bad than good in me, he, being the contrary of me, is the ideal of a good man: honest, firm, abstemious, virtuous in all respects. He knew my wife from the time she was quite a child. He was in love with her when she married me, and he bore his fate patiently. But after I had become disreputable, and she was in great straits, he came oftener to our house. I liked him to myself. She fell in love with her old friend, while I only behaved worse and worse, and then left my wife altogether. At that time I was madly in love with Masha. I proposed myself that they should marry. They did not want to. I went on misbehaving, and finally, of course —

PETUSHKOV.

The usual thing in this world!

FEDIA.

No. I feel sure that their love remained pure. I know it did. He is very religious, and marriage without the sanction of the Church is a sin in his eyes. Well, they wanted me to get a divorce, and I agreed to it. I was to plead guilty. But, oh! all the lies I would have had to tell. I could not

face it. I wonder whether you can believe it, but really I preferred killing myself to telling lies. I was on the point of doing so when a kind friend showed me that it was quite unnecessary. We did, accordingly, something quite different. I sent a farewell letter — and the next day my clothes and my notebook were found on the bank. I don't swim — that was known.

PETUSHKOV.

But how could they believe you dead if your body had not been found?

FEDIA.

It was found. Just imagine! A week after, some body or other was dragged out of the water. My wife was sent for to identify it as mine. It was quite decomposed. She looked at it. "Is that he?" they asked. "Yes, it is." That settled it. I have been buried; they married, live here in this town, and are very happy indeed. And you see what has become of me. I live and drink. Yesterday I passed their house. The windows were lit; some one's shadow passed across the window. Sometimes I feel very wretched, but at others I am all right. The worst is when I have no cash. (*He drinks.*)

ARTEMIEV.

(*approaching them.*) Excuse me, but you know I have been listening to that story of yours. A very entertaining one it is — and, the best of it is, a very profitable one. You say you dislike having no money. That is highly unpleasant, no doubt. And in your position you ought always to have lots of cash. You are dead, you say. Stone-dead, eh? Well —

FEDIA.

Look here, I did not tell *you* anything, and I am in no need of any advice from you.

ARTEMIEV.

But I want to give you a bit of advice. You are dead, aren't you? Well, if it were found out that you were alive, then those two, your wife and the man she's so happy with now, would be condemned for bigamy. The least sentence they could get would be deportation. Then why should you be short of money?

FEDIA.

Will you please leave me alone?

ARTEMIEV.

Just write them a letter. And if you don't

want to, let me write. Give me only their address, and you'll be grateful to me.

FEDIA.

Get away from here, I say. I did not tell you anything.

ARTEMIEV.

You did. I have a witness. The waiter here heard you saying you were dead.

WAITER.

I don't know anything about it.

FEDIA.

You wretch!

ARTEMIEV.

I am a wretch? Waiter, call a policeman. I'll let the authorities know about this.

(FEDIA *rises to go.* ARTEMIEV *holds him back. A* POLICEMAN *enters.*)

SCENE II

In the country. A terrace hung with ivy.

(ANNA DMITRIEVNA KARE-

NINA *is talking with* LISA (*enceinte.*) *The* NURSE *and* LISA'S BOY.

LISA.

He is already on his way from the station by now.

BOY.

Who's coming?

LISA.

Father.

BOY.

Oh, father's coming!

LISA.

C'est étonnant comme il l'aime. Tout à fait comme son père.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

Tant mieux. Se souvient-il de son père veritable?

LISA.

(*sighing.*) I haven't told him. I think it would only confuse him. But sometimes I feel I ought to. What do you think, mama?

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

It all depends on what you feel about it, Lisa. If you follow the suggestion of your own heart,

you will know when and what you ought to say. How wonderfully death reconciles us with those who are gone! I must confess there was a time when I simply hated Fedia — whom I knew as a boy. And now I just think of him only as a pleasant young man, Victor's friend. What an impulsive man he was! Of course, what he did was against the law, against religion. But all the same he sacrificed his life for those he loved. You may say what you like the action was a fine one. (*A pause.*) I hope Victor will not forget to bring me the wool. I shall soon have none left. (*She knits.*)

LISA.

There he comes.

(*The sound of approaching wheels and the tinkling of small bells attached to the harness is heard. She rises and goes to the end of the terrace.*)

He is not alone. I see a lady's hat at his side. Oh, that is mother! I have not seen her for ages. (*She goes to the door and meets* KARENIN *and* ANNA PAVLOVNA.)

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

(*kissing* LISA *and* ANNA DMITRIEVNA.) Victor met me and brought me with him.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

That is nice.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

I thought I had better come, so as not to put off my visit again. Here I am, and I will stay till the evening train, if you don't mind.

KARENIN.

(*Kissing his wife, the mother, and the boy.*) Congratulate me, all of you. I am so happy. I shan't have to go to town again for two days. They can manage without me to-morrow.

LISA.

Oh, how nice! Two days. It's so long since we've seen anything of you. Suppose we drive over to the hermitage. What do you say?

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

How like his father the boy is. And what a fine little fellow! I only wish he mayn't have inherited everything from his father: he has his kind heart.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

But not his weak will.

LISA.

He is like him in everything. Victor quite agrees with me that if Fedia had come under a good influence when he was young —

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

I don't understand all that. But I cannot think of Fedia without tears.

LISA.

We all feel just the same. We hold him far dearer in our memory than we did when he was alive.

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

Yes, indeed.

LISA.

How hopeless it all seemed at one time, and then on a sudden all the difficulties were solved.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

(*to her son.*) Well, Victor, have you brought me some wool?

KARENIN.

Yes, I have. (*Taking some parcels out of his bag.*) There is your wool and the eau-de-Cologne, and here are the letters. A letter for you,

Lisa, with a magistrate's seal. (*He hands the letter to* LISA.) Well, Anna Pavlovna, if you care to tidy up, let me show you your room. I must go and wash after our drive; dinner will soon be ready. Lisa, shall I show Anna Pavlovna into the corner room downstairs?

(LISA, *quite pale, holds the letter with trembling hands and reads it.*)

KARENIN.

What is it, Lisa? What is in that letter?

LISA.

He is alive! O God, when shall I be free from him? O Victor, what does it all mean? (*She breaks into sobs.*)

KARENIN.

(*taking the letter and reading.*) Horrible!

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

What has happened? Tell me — tell me what it is!

KARENIN.

It is awful. He is alive. She is accused of bigamy, and I am a criminal too. This letter is from the investigating magistrate, who summons Lisa to him.

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

Horrible wretch! Why did he do it?

KARENIN.

It was all a lie — a lie!

LISA.

Oh, how I hate him! — I don't know what I am saying.

(*She goes into the house in tears.* KARENIN *follows her.*)

ANNA PAVLOVNA.

Is it really possible he is alive? How can it be?

ANNA DMITRIEVNA.

I have always felt — that from the moment Victor came into touch with them, they were bound to drag him down into the mire. And they have. They are all lies — lies and deceit!

ACT VI

SCENE I

(*The* INVESTIGATING MAGISTRATE'S *office.*)

(*The* MAGISTRATE *sits at the*

table, talking with MELNIKOV. *His* CLERK *is looking through a pile of paper.*)

MAGISTRATE.

I never told her that. She invented it all, and now she reproaches me.

MELNIKOV.

She does not reproach you, but she is hurt.

MAGISTRATE.

Well, I will come to dinner. Just now I have an interesting case. (*To the* CLERK.) Call them in, please.

CLERK.

Both?

MAGISTRATE.

(*finishing a cigarette.*) No, first Madame Karenina, or, rather, Madame Protassova, to call her by her first name.

MELNIKOV.

Oh, it is Madame Karenina.

MAGISTRATE.

Yes, an ugly business. I am only beginning the inquiry, but I can see it is a bad business. Well, good-bye.

(MELNIKOV *goes out.*
The CLERK *goes out and fetches* LISA. *She is in a black dress and black veil.*)

MAGISTRATE.

Be seated, please. (*He points to the chair at the side of his table.* LISA *sits down.*) I am very sorry, believe me, to have to question you. But it is my duty. Be perfectly quiet, please. You have the right not to answer questions if you do not want to. But I should advise you not to conceal the truth — this is by far the best for you and for all the others. From the practical point of view the truth will be far the best policy.

LISA.

I have nothing to conceal.

MAGISTRATE.

(*looking in the paper before him.*) Your rank? Religion? I have that down already. I suppose it is correct? (*He shows her the paper.*)

LISA.

(*reading.*) Yes.

MAGISTRATE.

You are charged with having contracted a sec-

ond marriage, well knowing that your first husband was alive.

LISA.

I did *not* know it.

MAGISTRATE.

And also with having bribed your first husband to pretend that he had committed suicide, in order that you might regain your freedom.

LISA.

That is all false.

MAGISTRATE.

Allow me to put to you a few questions. In July last, did you send him twelve hundred roubles?

LISA.

The money belonged to him. It was the sum produced by the sale of different things he left. When I parted with him, and was waiting for the divorce, I sent him this money.

MAGISTRATE.

Very well. This money was sent the 17th of July, that is, two days before he disappeared.

LISA.

I think that was the date. But I don't quite remember.

MAGISTRATE.

Now, why was your lawyer instructed to withdraw your petition for a divorce at precisely that time?

LISA.

I don't know.

MAGISTRATE.

Very well. Now, when the police asked you to examine the corpse, how did it happen that you identified it as being that of your husband?

LISA.

I was so much upset that I did not look at the corpse. I was so certain it was he that when they asked me whether it was I said I thought it was.

MAGISTRATE.

You did not examine the corpse, because you were in a state of great agitation. That is easily understood. Very well. But may I ask why you sent by post every month a certain sum of money to Saratov, the town where your first husband resided?

LISA.

It was my husband who sent that money. I cannot tell you to whom. It was a secret of his and not of mine. I can only assure you that it was not sent to Fedor Vasilievich. We were firmly convinced that he was dead. That is an absolute fact.

MAGISTRATE.

Very well. Permit me only to say, madam, that although we are servants of the law that does not prevent us from being humane. Believe me, I quite understand the sadness of your position, and have the greatest sympathy for your troubles. You were tied to a man who squandered your property, who was unfaithful; who, in short, made you miserable.

LISA.

I loved him.

MAGISTRATE.

Of course. Still it was quite natural for you to desire your liberty, and you chose this simple way without thinking that it might lead you to what is considered a crime — to bigamy. I quite understand that, and the jury will also understand. That is why I would advise you to tell the entire truth.

LISA.

I have told it. I have never lied in my life. (*She bursts into tears.*) May I go now?

MAGISTRATE.

I must ask you to remain here for a while. I will not trouble you with any more questions. None at all. I must ask you simply to read your deposition and to sign it. You will see whether I have taken down your answers correctly. Will you kindly sit here? (*Pointing to the table near the window; then to the clerk.*) Show in Mr. Karenin.

(*The clerk shows in* KARENIN, *looking earnest and rather solemn.*)

MAGISTRATE.

Be seated, please.

KARENIN.

Thank you. (*He remains standing.*) What do you want from me?

MAGISTRATE.

My duty is to make an inquiry.

KARENIN.

In what capacity?

MAGISTRATE.

(*smiling.*) In my capacity as investigating magistrate. You are here charged with a crime.

KARENIN.

Indeed? With what crime?

MAGISTRATE.

Bigamy. But kindly let me put you some questions. Pray be seated.

KARENIN.

No, thank you.

MAGISTRATE.

Your name?

KARENIN.

Victor Karenin.

MAGISTRATE.

Your rank?

KARENIN.

Chamberlain of the Imperial Court.

MAGISTRATE.

Your age?

KARENIN.

Thirty-eight.

MAGISTRATE.

Your religion?

KARENIN.

Orthodox Greek. I have never before been tried on any charge. Well, what next?

MAGISTRATE.

Were you aware that Fedor Vasilievich Protassov was alive when you contracted a marriage with his wife?

KARENIN.

No; I did not know that. We were certain that he was drowned.

MAGISTRATE.

To whom did you send money every month after the false report of Protassov's death?

KARENIN.

I refuse to answer that question.

MAGISTRATE.

Very well. What was the object of your having sent twelve hundred roubles to Protassov a few days before his simulated suicide on July 17th?

KARENIN.

The money was given me to post by my wife.

MAGISTRATE.

By Madame Protassov?

KARENIN.

By my wife to send to her husband. She considered that this sum of money was his property, and having parted with him she thought it unfair to keep his money.

MAGISTRATE.

One question more: why did you stop taking steps to obtain a divorce?

KARENIN.

Because Fedor Vasilievich had undertaken to do all that was necessary, and wrote me a letter to that effect.

MAGISTRATE.

You have that letter?

KARENIN.

No; I have lost it.

MAGISTRATE.

It is very awkward that everything should be lost that could have afforded proof that you are speaking the truth.

KARENIN.

What else do you want from me?

MAGISTRATE.

All I want is to do my duty; and what you want is to prove your innocence. So I should advise you, as I have advised Madame Protassova, not to conceal things which are sure to be found out, and to say frankly what actually happened. It is more advisable, because Protassov himself is in such a condition that he relates the actual facts about everything, and will probably do so in court. I should strongly advise you —

KARENIN.

I shall be obliged if you will do your duty strictly without volunteering any kind of advice. May we go? (*He goes to* LISA, *who takes his arm.*)

MAGISTRATE.

I am sorry, but I must keep you here just now.

(KARENIN *turns to him with astonishment.*)

Oh no, I don't mean to arrest you, although it would greatly facilitate my inquiry. But I shall not proceed to that step. I only want to

question Protassov in your presence, and confront him with you, to give you an opportunity of proving the untruth of his statements. Be seated, please. (*To the clerk.*) Call in Mr. Protassov.

(*The clerk fetches in* FEDIA, *in rags, a total wreck.*)

FEDIA.

(*to* LISA *and* KARENIN.) Elizaveta Andreevna, Victor, it is not my fault it has come to this. I wanted only to do the best for you. If I am guilty, forgive me. (*He bows to the ground before them.*)

MAGISTRATE.

Will you, please, answer my questions?

FEDIA.

Ask whatever you like.

MAGISTRATE.

Your name?

FEDIA.

But you know it.

MAGISTRATE.

Answer, please.

FEDIA.

Fedor Protassov.

MAGISTRATE.

Rank, religion, age?

FEDIA.

(*after a short silence.*) You ought to be ashamed to ask such silly questions. Ask something to the point, and leave all that nonsense.

MAGISTRATE.

Be careful, please, in your expressions. Answer my questions.

FEDIA.

Well, as you are not ashamed. My rank: graduate of the University of Moscow. My age: forty. My religion: orthodox Greek. What next?

MAGISTRATE.

Did Mr. Karenin and his wife know you were alive when you left your clothes on the bank and disappeared?

FEDIA.

They did not. There can be no doubt about that. I actually intended to kill myself, but then — But I need not tell you all that. The point is that they did *not* know.

MAGISTRATE.

Your statements to the police officer contained a different story. What is the meaning of that?

FEDIA.

What police officer? Oh yes, a police officer came to the Rjanov night-shelter to see me. I was drunk, and I told all sorts of lies. I don't remember now what I said. That was all nonsense. Now I am not drunk, and I am telling you the truth. They did not know. They believed me dead. How glad I was they did! And it would have been all right for ever but for that wretch Artemiev. But if somebody must be found guilty, it is only I.

MAGISTRATE.

I understand your desire to be generous, but the law wants the truth. Why had you money sent to you?

(FEDIA *makes no answer.*)

MAGISTRATE.

You received that money through a man named Semenov, in Saratov.

(FEDIA *makes no answer.*)

MAGISTRATE.

Why do you not answer? My report will men-

tion that the defendant did not answer these questions. This would certainly be in favour of the prosecution, and hurt both you and the other two. Don't you see that?

FEDIA.

(*silent for a moment, then passionately.*) Oh, are you not ashamed, sir? Why do you thrust yourself into other people's lives! You are engrossed by the power you possess, and you must show it off! You cause endless pain — moral pain, much worse than physical torture — to those who are a thousand times better and worthier than you.

MAGISTRATE.

I beg —

FEDIA.

Don't beg. I will tell you what I think, and you (*to the clerk*) just write it down. At least, for the first time, one of these reports will contain sense, and something manly. (*Raising his voice.*) There are three of us: she, he, and I. The relations between us have been very complicated: a moral struggle, the like of which you never dreamed of. This struggle has brought about a situation which solved the difficulties. All our troubles were over. They were happy, they loved my memory. I, in my disgrace, was happy too, because I had done

the right thing; because I had disappeared from life — and quite right too — so as not to be in the way of those who were full of life and lived an honest life. We all lived as we ought to. Then suddenly a blackmailing blackguard comes along, and wants me to be a party to his plan of blackmail. I turn him out. He goes to you, the champion of justice, the guardian of morality. And you, just because you get some wretched monthly screw for your filthy work, you put on your uniform and swagger at your ease; showing off your power over those who tower above you, and who would not let you pass the threshold of their houses. You have climbed to a sort of pinnacle, and you are happy —

MAGISTRATE.

I shall have you turned out.

FEDIA.

Oh, I am not afraid of anything. I am a dead man — you can do nothing to me. I can't be worse off than I am, whatever you do to me. You may order me out. I don't mind.

KARENIN.

May we go?

MAGISTRATE.

Sign your deposition first.

FEDIA.

Ha, ha, ha, ha! You pitiful beast!

MAGISTRATE.

Take him away. I shall make out an order for your arrest.

FEDIA.

(*to* KARENIN *and* LISA.) Forgive me.

KARENIN.

(*stretching out his hand to him.*) It was fated to happen so.

(LISA *passes;* FEDIA *bows low to her.*)

SCENE II

A passage in law the court. In the background is a glass door, with a GUARD *standing before it. To the right is another door, through which the Prisoners are being conducted to the court.*

IVAN PETROVICH, *in rags, goes to the door on the right, and tries to pass through it.*

GUARD.

Stop! No admission here. How dare you!

IVAN PETROVICH.

Why no admission? The law says that the sittings of the court are public.

(*Applause is heard from within.*)

GUARD.

No admission, I say. I am ordered not to let anybody pass.

IVAN PETROVICH.

You rude fellow! You don't know whom you are addressing.

(*A* YOUNG LAWYER *enters.*)

YOUNG LAWYER.

Are you here on business?

IVAN PETROVICH.

No, I am one of the public. And this rude fellow, this Cerberus, won't let me go in.

YOUNG LAWYER.

This is not the entrance for the public. Wait a minute; the court will adjourn presently for lunch.

(*He is about to go, but stops, seeing* PRINCE ABRESKOV *coming in.*)

IVAN PETROVICH.

I ought to be admitted, anyhow.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

May I inquire how far the proceedings have gone?

YOUNG LAWYER.

The speeches for the defence have just begun. Petrushin is speaking now.

(*Applause is heard from the court.*)

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

What attitude do the defendants adopt?

YOUNG LAWYER.

Very dignified indeed, especially that of Karenin and Elizaveta Andreevna. It is as if they were the judges and not the defendants. This is the general impression. And Petrushin is taking advantage of that.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

And Protassov?

YOUNG LAWYER.

He is extremely excited, trembles all the time.

Quite natural, considering his life. But he is too irritable. He interrupted the counsel for the prosecution more than once, and his own counsel. He is in a frightful state of excitement.

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

What sentence do you anticipate?

YOUNG LAWYER.

It is hard to say; it is a very mixed jury. Obviously the jury won't bring it in that there has been any premeditation. But, all the same . . .

(*The door opens, a gentleman comes out of the court,* PRINCE ABRESKOV *moves to the door.*)

YOUNG LAWYER.

Would you like to go in?

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

I should, very much.

YOUNG LAWYER.

You are Prince Abreskov?

PRINCE ABRESKOV.

Yes.

YOUNG LAWYER.

(*to the Guard.*) Let this gentleman pass. There is a free seat on the left; take it.

(PRINCE ABRESKOV *is allowed to enter; a door is opened for him, the* COUNSEL *for the defence is seen through it speaking.*)

IVAN PETROVICH.

Silly aristocrats! I am an intellectual aristocrat. That's something much more.

YOUNG LAWYER.

Excuse me. (*He goes off hurriedly.*)

PETUSHKOV (*entering.*)

There you are, Ivan Petrovich! How are you? How far have the proceedings gone?

IVAN PETROVICH.

The speeches for the defence have begun. Don't try to pass. They will not let you.

GUARD.

Silence. You are not in a public-house here.

(*Further applause is heard. The door opens, and there is a*

rush of LAWYERS, GENTLEMEN, *and* LADIES *into the passage.*)

FIRST LADY.

Wonderful! He moved me to tears.

OFFICER.

It is more thrilling than any novel. But I cannot understand how she could have loved him. Such a horrible face!

(*The other door opens and the* DEFENDANTS *appear;* LISA *and* KARENIN *go through the passage.* FEDIA *follows them.*)

FIRST LADY.

Don't talk. Here he comes. Look how agitated he is.

(*The* LADY *and* OFFICER *pass off.*)

FEDIA.

(*Coming near to Ivan Petrovich.*) You have brought it?

IVAN PETROVICH.

Here it is. (*He hands him a case.*)

FEDIA.

(*hides it in his pocket and moves to go; then sees*

PETUSHKOV.) How stupid it all is. How wearisome! How meaningless! (*He turns to go.*)

PETRUSHIN.

(*his counsel; a stout man, with red cheeks, very animated.*) Well, my friend, our case is looking up. But don't spoil things in your last speech.

FEDIA.

I shall not speak at all. I don't want to.

PETRUSHIN.

No? — you must. But don't be uneasy. Now we are pretty sure to win. You just tell them what you told me — that if you are being tried it is for not having committed suicide, which would have meant committing a crime indeed, against both civil and ecclesiastic laws.

FEDIA.

I shall not tell them anything.

PETRUSHIN.

Why not?

FEDIA.

I don't want to. Tell me only — at the worst, what can happen?

PETRUSHIN.

I told you. At the worst, it might be deportation to Siberia.

FEDIA.

Who would be deported?

PETRUSHIN.

You and your wife.

FEDIA.

And at the best?

PETRUSHIN.

Penance in a monastery, and, of course, the annulment of the second marriage.

FEDIA.

In fact, I shall be tied to her again. I mean she tied to me?

PETRUSHIN.

Well, that cannot be helped. But don't be so agitated. And please say what I told you to say. I beseech you not to say what is unnecessary. You want — (*noticing that they are surrounded by listeners.*) I am tired. I will go and rest. You ought to rest also in the meanwhile. And mind, don't let yourself be alarmed.

FEDIA.

No other sentence could possibly be expected?

PETRUSHIN.

(*going.*) No other.

(OFFICERS *of the Court enter, pass, and stand in the passage.*)

FEDIA.

Now then. (*He takes the revolver out of his pocket and shoots himself through the heart. He falls. All the people in the passage rush to him.*) I think I have not missed this time. Call Lisa.

(*People are crowding in from all the doors: Judges, witnesses, public.* LISA *rushes to Fedia.* MASHA, KARENIN, IVAN PETROVICH, PRINCE ABRESKOV *follow her.*)

LISA.

What have you done, Fedia! Why?

FEDIA.

Forgive me, I could not make you free before. . . . Now, it is not for you, it is for my own

sake. . . . I am much better so. I was ready even . . .

LISA.

You will live.

(*A doctor bends down over him, lays his ear to his heart.*)

FEDIA.

Oh, I know it is over. Good-bye, Victor. And, Masha, you are late this time. Oh, how happy I am now! (*Dies.*)

THE CAUSE OF IT ALL

CHARACTERS

OLD AKULINA. Seventy years old; still brisk, dignified, old fashioned.

MICHAEL. Her son; thirty-five, passionate, proud, vain, strong.

MARTHA. His wife, thirty-two. A grumbler; talks a great deal and rapidly.

PARASKA. Ten years old. Daughter of Michael and Martha.

WATCHMAN TARAS. Fifty. Self-important, gives himself airs, speaks slowly.

TRAMP. Forty; wiry, thin, speaks stiltedly. When drunk is very free.

IGNAT. A chatterbox, gay, stupid.

NEIGHBOUR. Forty. Fussy.

AUTUMN. A hut with a closet.

THE CAUSE OF IT ALL

ACT I

Old AKULINA *is spinning; the housewife* MARTHA *is making dough; little* PARASKA *is rocking the cradle.*

MARTHA.

Oh, my heart has a boding of ill. What can he be about? It will be as bad as last time when he went to sell the wood. He spent nearly half on drink. And it's always my fault.

AKULINA.

Why reckon on evil? It is still early. It is a long way off. It takes time.

MARTHA.

Akimich has returned. It's not early. He left after my man, but my man is not back. Worry, worry, that's all the pleasure one gets.

AKULINA.

Akimich had sold his wood; he only had to deliver it. Our man was taking his to the market.

MARTHA.

I should not be afraid if he was alone, but he went with Ignat. And every time he goes out with that thick-headed mule — heaven help me! it never ends well, he always gets drunk. Day after day I struggle on. Everything depends on me. If anything good ever came along! But nothing pleasant ever happens, and it's work, work from morning till night.

The door opens, and the local watchman TARAS *enters with a ragged tramp.*

TARAS.

How do you do? I have brought you a lodger.

TRAMP.

(*Bowing.*) Greetings to the hosts.

MARTHA.

Why do you bring them to us so often? We had a man here Wednesday night. You always bring them to us. You ought to take them to Stepanida: she has no children. I don't know where to turn with mine, and you always bring tramps to us.

TARAS.

I take them to every one in turn.

MARTHA.

In turn, indeed! I have children. And my man is out.

TARAS.

If he sleeps here he won't wear out the place he lies on.

AKULINA.

(*To the* TRAMP.) Come in, sit down. Make yourself at home.

TRAMP.

Thanks. I should like something to eat, if possible.

MARTHA.

Hasn't had time to look round, and asks for food at once. Didn't you come through the village?

TRAMP.

(*Sighs.*) I'm not accustomed to this sort of thing in my position. But as I have nothing of my own —

AKULINA *rises, gets the bread, cuts a slice and gives it to the tramp.*

TRAMP.

(*Taking the bread.*) *Merci.* (*He sits down on the bench and eats greedily.*)

TARAS.

Where is Michael?

MARTHA.

Gone to town with the hay. It's time he was back, but he's not. I can't help thinking something has happened.

TARAS.

What could happen?

MARTHA.

What, indeed? Nothing good, of course; but you can count on something bad.

AKULINA.

(*Sitting down to her spinning wheel. To* TARAS, *pointing at* MARTHA.) She never can hold her tongue. I know, we women are not wise. But once he's out of the house, he doesn't care a rap. I expect him to come home drunk.

MARTHA.

If he was alone I wouldn't be afraid, but he went with Ignat.

TARAS.

(*Smiling.*) Oh, well, Ignat Ivanovich is a rare one for drink.

AKULINA.

What has Ignat got to do with him?

MARTHA.

It's all very well for you to talk, mother. But I'm just sick to death of his drunkenness. When he's sober, it would be a sin to complain, but when he's drunk you know what he's like. Don't say a word. Everything's wrong.

TARAS.

But what about you women? A man gets drunk. Well, what of that? He shows off a bit. Sleep it off, and all will be smooth again. But you women must pester.

MARTHA.

It doesn't matter what you do. If he's drunk, everything's wrong.

TARAS.

You must understand that a man can't help drinking sometimes. Your woman's work keeps you at home; but we can't help it, if we've got business or are in company. What if one does drink? There's no harm in it.

MARTHA.

It's all very well for you to talk, but it's hard on us women; oh! so hard. If you men were in our place for a week you'd alter your tune, I know. Make and bake, and boil and spin, and weave, and the cattle, and all the work, and these little naked things to be washed and dressed and fed. It all falls on us, and directly the least thing isn't exactly as he likes — there it is, especially when he's drunk. Oh, what a life is woman's!

TRAMP.

(*Munching.*) Quite true. Drink is the cause of it all, and all the catastrophes of life come from it.

TARAS.

It's evident that it's knocked you over.

TRAMP.

No, not exactly, though I have suffered from it too. Were it not for that, the course of my life might have been different.

TARAS.

Well, to my mind, if you drink wisely no harm comes of it.

TRAMP.

And I say it has such power that it may ruin a man.

MARTHA.

That's what I say. You work, you do your best, and all your reward is to be scolded or beaten like a dog.

TRAMP.

Not only that, but there are people who are slaves to it — who lose their heads through it, and perform actions that are quite undesirable. So long as he does not drink, give him anything you like, he will take nothing that does not belong to him. Once he's drunk, he grabs anything that comes to hand. He gets blows, he is put in prison. When he's not drunk he is honest, worthy; but directly he drinks, he becomes slavish — he takes anything he can.

AKULINA.

I think it depends on oneself.

TRAMP.

It depends on oneself when one is healthy, but drink is a disease.

TARAS.

A disease, indeed! You give him what he de-

serves, and that disease will very soon disappear. Good-bye, so long. (*He leaves.*)

MARTHA, *wiping her hands, is about to go out.*

AKULINA.

(*Looking at the tramp and seeing that he has eaten the bread.*) Martha, Martha, cut him some more.

MARTHA.

What next! I'm going to see to the samovar.

AKULINA *rises, goes to the table, takes the bread and cuts a slice and gives it to the tramp.*

TRAMP.

Merci. I have developed a great appetite.

AKULINA.

Are you a factory hand?

TRAMP.

Who? I? I was an engine-driver.

AKULINA.

Did you earn much?

TRAMP.

From 50 to 70 roubles a month.

AKULINA.

Dear me! How on earth did you come down in the world so?

TRAMP.

I'm not the only one who's come down in the world. I came down because we live in such times that an honest man can't make his way.

MARTHA.

(*Entering with samovar.*) O Lord, he's not back yet. He'll certainly be drunk. My heart tells me so.

AKULINA.

I'm beginning to think he's gone on the spree.

MARTHA.

There, you see! I have to struggle on alone, make and bake, boil and spin, and weave, and the cattle, it all falls on me, and these little naked things. (*She points to the children. The baby in the cradle screams.*) Parasha, rock the cradle. Oh, what a life is woman's! And if he's drunk it is all wrong. Say a word he doesn't like —

AKULINA.

(*Making the tea.*) Here's the last of the tea. Did you tell him to bring some?

MARTHA.

Of course. He meant to. But will he? Will he give a thought to his home? (*She puts the samovar on the table.*)

The TRAMP *leaves the table.*

AKULINA.

Why do you get up? We are going to have tea.

TRAMP.

I give you thanks for your kind hospitality. (*He throws down his cigarette and approaches the table.*)

MARTHA.

What are you? Are you a peasant or what?

TRAMP.

I'm neither a peasant nor a noble, missus; I belong to a double-edged class.

MARTHA.

What do you mean! (*Gives him a cup.*)

TRAMP.

Merci. I mean that my father was a Polish count; and besides him there were many more, and I had two mothers also.

AKULINA.

O Lord! How could you?

TRAMP.

It was this way, because my mother lived in prostitution — in polygamy, therefore — and there were all sorts of fathers, and there were two mothers, because the mother who bore me deserted me in my tender years. A yard-porter's wife took pity on me and brought me up. In general, my biography is complicated.

MARTHA.

Have some more tea. Were you apprenticed?

TRAMP.

My apprenticeship was unsatisfactory. I was given to a smith, not by my real mother but my adopted mother. That blacksmith was my first teacher. And his teaching consisted in beating me so, that he hit his anvil seldomer than my unhappy head. But no matter how much he beat me, he could not deprive me of talent. Then I went to a locksmith; there I was appreciated, and made my way. I became the chief craftsman; I made the acquaintance of educated men. I belonged to a party; I was able to acquire literary

speech. My life might have been raised, for I had enormous talent.

AKULINA.

Of course.

TRAMP.

And then there was a disturbance — the tyrannous burden of the people's life — and I got into prison, and was deprived of liberty of my life.

MARTHA.

What for?

TRAMP.

For rights.

MARTHA.

What rights?

TRAMP.

What rights! The rights that the well-to-do should not be everlastingly idle, and that the working proletariat should be rewarded for his toil.

AKULINA.

You're talking about the land.

TRAMP.

Of course. It is the same in the agrarian question.

AKULINA.

May the Lord and the Queen of Heaven grant it. We are sorely pushed for land.

TRAMP.

So my barque was carried along on the waves of life's ocean.

AKULINA.

What are you going to do now?

TRAMP.

Now? Now I'm going to Moscow. I shall go to some contractor. There's no help for it. I shall humble myself. I shall say, Give me any work you like, only take me on.

AKULINA.

Have some more tea.

TRAMP.

Thank you; I mean *merci.*

AKULINA.

There's Michael. Just in time for tea.

MARTHA.

(*Rises.*) Oh, woe betide us. He's with Ignat. So he's drunk.

MICHAEL *and* IGNAT *stumble into the room; both are drunk.*

IGNAT.

How do you do? (*He prays before the ikon.*) Here we are, you dirty skunk,* just in time for the samovar. We go to church — mass is just over; we go to dinner, just eaten up, but we go to the pub and we're in the nick of time. Ha-ha-ha. You offer us tea, we offer you vodka. That's all right, isn't it? (*He laughs.*)

MICHAEL.

Where did this swell come from? (*He takes a bottle from his coat pocket and puts it on the table.*) Where are the cups?

AKULINA.

Did you have a good trip?

IGNAT.

It couldn't have been better, you dirty skunk. We drank, we had a good time, and here we are.

MICHAEL.

(*Fills the cup, and hands one to his mother and then one to the tramp.*) Have a drink, too.

* *Literally,* "dirty stick"— a very offensive expression in Russia.— *Editor.*

TRAMP.

(*Takes cup.*) I give you heartfelt thanks. To your health. (*Empties cup.*)

IGNAT.

You're a brick, you dirty skunk, to gulp it down like that. I expect it's gone all down your muscles after your fast. (*He pours out more vodka.*)

TRAMP.

(*Drinking.*) I wish success to all you undertake.

AKULINA.

Did you get a good price?

IGNAT.

Whatever the price was, it's all gone on drink, you dirty skunk. Hasn't it, Michael?

MICHAEL.

Of course. What's the good of looking at money? It's not often you get the chance of a spree.

MARTHA.

What are you showing off for? It's not nice. There's no food in the house, and you go on like this.

MICHAEL.

(*Threateningly.*) Martha!

MARTHA.

What's the good of saying Martha? I know I'm Martha. The very sight of you makes me sick, you shameless drunkard!

MICHAEL.

Martha, you take care.

MARTHA.

Take care, indeed. I shan't take care.

MICHAEL.

Pour out the vodka, and offer it to the guests.

MARTHA.

Oh, you blear-eyed dog! I don't want to speak to you.

MICHAEL.

You don't! You dog's hide! What did you say?

MARTHA.

(*Rocking the cradle.*) What did I say? I said I didn't want to speak to you, so there!

MICHAEL.

Ah, you've forgotten? (*Springs from the table and gives her a blow on the head that displaces her shawl.*)

MARTHA.

(*Running to the door.*) Oh-h-h-h!

MICHAEL.

You shan't go away, you beast! (*Rushes towards her.*)

TRAMP.

(*Jumps from the table and seizes* MICHAEL'S *hand.*) You have no right whatever to do that.

MICHAEL.

(*Pausing and looking at the tramp with amazement.*) Is it long since you had a thrashing?

TRAMP.

You have no right whatever to insult the female sex.

MICHAEL.

Oh, you hound. Do you see that? (*He shows him his fist.*)

TRAMP.

You are not allowed to exploit the female sex.

MICHAEL.

I'll give you such a sound licking that you won't know your head from your heels.

TRAMP.

Well, beat me. Why don't you? Beat me. (*He offers him his face.*)

MICHAEL.

(*Shrugs his shoulders and lifts his hands.*) Well, if I do —

TRAMP.

You may sin seven times; you can only pay the penalty once. Beat me.

MICHAEL.

You are a queer man, I must say. (*He drops his arms and shakes his head.*)

IGNAT.

It's easy to see you're pretty gone on women, you dirty skunk.

TRAMP.

I stand up for rights.

MICHAEL.

(*To* MARTHA, *going to the table and breathing heavily.*) Well, Martha, you'd better light

a big candle, and say a good prayer for him.* If it hadn't been for him I'd have beaten you to pulp.

MARTHA.

What else do I expect from you? Struggle all your life, bake and boil, and directly —

MICHAEL.

That'll do, that'll do. (*He offers the tramp some vodka.*) Drink. (*To his wife.*) What are you making such a fuss about? Can't understand a joke. Here, take the money, and put it away. Here are six roubles and forty kopeks.

AKULINA.

What about the tea and sugar she asked for?

MICHAEL *gets a packet out of his pocket and gives it to his wife.* MARTHA *takes the money and the parcel and goes into the closet, silently arranging the shawl on her head.*

MICHAEL.

These women folk are such fools. (*He offers more vodka.*)

* It is a custom in Russia to light candles before ikons in the churches, and to light one on behalf of the person you wish to thank is a common way of expressing gratitude.—*Editor.*

TRAMP.

(*Refusing.*) Drink it yourself.

MICHAEL.

Don't stand on ceremony.

TRAMP.

(*Drinks.*) All success to you.

IGNAT.

(*To the* TRAMP.) I expect you've seen many sights. Oh, you've got a fine coat on, a real good coat. Wherever did you get it? (*He touches the ragged coat.*) Don't you mend it; it's fine just as it is. Years are telling on it, but you can't help that. If I had a coat like that the women would love me too. (*To* MARTHA.) Wouldn't they?

AKULINA.

You ought not to make fun of a man that you know nothing about, Ignat.

TRAMP.

It is want of education.

IGNAT.

I mean it kindly. Drink. (*Offers cup.*)
TRAMP *drinks.*

AKULINA.

You said yourself that it was the cause of all things, and that you'd been to prison through it.

MICHAEL.

What did you do time for?

TRAMP.

(*Very drunk.*) I suffered because I made an appropriation.

MICHAEL.

How?

TRAMP.

It was like this. We came to him, the fat-bellied creature, and we said, "Money — if not, see here's a revolver." He tried every way, this way and that, but he gave us 2,300 roubles.

AKULINA.

O Lord!

TRAMP.

We were just going to distribute this sum fairly; Zembrikov was our leader. But the crows were down on us. We were arrested — sent to prison.

IGNAT.

And did they take the money.

TRAMP.

Of course. But they could not bring it home to me. The prosecuting counsel said to me, "You have stolen money." I answered at once, "Robbers steal; but we have simply appropriated for the party." He couldn't say anything to that. He tried one thing and another, but he could not answer. "Take him away to prison," he said, thus cutting short my liberty of my life.

IGNAT.

(*To* MICHAEL.) He's clever, the hound. A brick. (*He offers more vodka.*) Drink, you dirty skunk.

AKULINA.

What language you do use.

IGNAT.

I'm not swearing, grannie. That's only a little phrase of mine — dirty skunk, dirty skunk. To your health, grannie.

MARTHA *comes in, goes to the table and pours out tea.*

MICHAEL.

That's all right. What's the good of being offended? I say thank you to him. I respect

you, Martha, ever so much. (*To the* TRAMP.) Don't you make a mistake. (*He puts his arm round* MARTHA.) I respect my old woman — that's how I respect my old woman. My old woman; she's A1. I wouldn't change her for anybody.

IGNAT.

That's right. Grannie Akulina, have a drink. I stand it.

TRAMP.

Such is the power of alcoholic stimulation. Every one was in a state of melancholy. Now all is pleasant. Friendly feeling reigns, grannie. I feel full of love to you and to all mankind. Dear brothers. (*He sings a revolutionary song.*)

MICHAEL.

It affects him very much. He's been starved.

ACT II

The same hut. Morning. AKULINA *and* MARTHA. MICHAEL *is still sleeping.*

MARTHA.

(*Picking up the axe.*) I'm going to chop some wood.

AKULINA.

(*With a pail.*) He'd have knocked you about badly yesterday if it hadn't been for that other one. I don't see him. Has he gone? I expect he has.

They both go out.

MICHAEL.

(*Getting down from the stove.*) Oh, oh, the sun is up. (*He gets up and puts on his boots.*) I suppose the women have gone to fetch water. Oh, my head does ache. But I don't care. It can go to the devil. (*Says his prayers; washes.*) I'll go and harness the horse.

MARTHA *enters with wood.*

MARTHA.

Where's yesterday's beggar? Is he gone?

MICHAEL.

I suppose so. I don't see him.

MARTHA.

It doesn't matter. But he is clearly a clever man. He said he earned fifty roubles a month. He is a good man also.

MICHAEL.

You think he is good because he took your part.

MARTHA.

What of that?

MICHAEL *dresses.*

MARTHA.

Did you put away the tea and sugar you brought home last night?

MICHAEL.

I thought you took them.

AKULINA *enters with the pail.*

MARTHA.

(*To the old woman.*) Mother, did you take the parcel?

AKULINA.

I don't know anything about it.

MICHAEL.

I put it down on the window sill last night.

AKULINA.

I saw it there.

MARTHA.

Where can it be? (*Searches.*)

AKULINA.

It's a bad job.

A NEIGHBOUR *enters.*

NEIGHBOUR.

Well, Michael, are you ready to go for the wood?

MICHAEL.

Of course. I'll harness directly. But, you see, we've lost something.

NEIGHBOUR.

Have you? What is it?

MARTHA.

The master brought back a parcel of tea and sugar from town last night. He put it here on the window. I hadn't the sense to put it away, and now it's gone.

MICHAEL.

We suspect the tramp who slept here.

NEIGHBOUR.

What tramp?

MARTHA.

He was a thin man, without a beard.

MICHAEL.

With a ragged coat.

NEIGHBOUR.

And curly hair and a hooked nose?

MICHAEL.

Yes, yes.

NEIGHBOUR.

I just met him. I wondered to see him walk so fast.

MICHAEL.

It's sure to be him. Was he far off when you met him?

NEIGHBOUR.

I don't expect he's crossed the bridge yet.

MICHAEL.

(*Seizes his cap; he and the* NEIGHBOUR *run out.*) We must catch him, the rogue. He took it.

MARTHA.

Oh, what a sin. It's sure to be him.

AKULINA.

And what if it is not? Once, about twenty years ago, a man was accused of having stolen a

horse. The villagers gathered together; one said, "I saw him put a halter on him." Another said, "I saw him leading it off." The horse was a big, long, dappled one, easy to see. Everybody began to search for it. In the wood they met the young man. "You took it." He swore on his oath he hadn't. "You took it. What's the good of looking at him?" said one; "the women said they had seen him and they are right." He answered roughly. And George Lapushkin, a hot-tempered man he was — he's dead now — just lifted his fist and gave him a blow in the face. "It was you," he said. After that blow, every one fell on him; they struck him with sticks and with their fists, and they beat him to death. And then what do you think happened? The next day they found the real thief. The other young man had only gone to the wood to pick out a tree to fell.

MARTHA.

Of course, it's easy enough to make a mistake. Although he's not in a good position, it's clear he's a good man.

AKULINA.

He's fallen very low. What can you expect from such a man?

MARTHA.

Listen to them shouting! They are bringing him back, I expect.

MICHAEL *enters, also the* NEIGHBOUR, *an old man, and a boy. They push in the* TRAMP *between them.*

MICHAEL.

(*Holding the tea and sugar to his wife, excitedly.*) I found it in his trouser pocket. The thief, the rogue!

AKULINA.

(*To* MARTHA.) Yes, it's him, poor fellow. See how he hangs his head.

MARTHA.

He was evidently talking about himself yesterday, when he said that a man will take anything when he's drunk.

TRAMP.

I'm not a thief. I'm an appropriator. I am a worker, and I must live. You can't understand. You may do your worst.

NEIGHBOUR.

Shall we take him to the village elder, or straight to the police?

TRAMP.

Do what you like, I say. I am afraid of nothing, and can suffer for my convictions. If you were well educated you would understand.

MARTHA.

(*To her husband.*) Let him go in peace. We've got the parcel back. Let him go; don't let us sin.

MICHAEL.

(*Repeating his wife's words.*) Don't let us sin. You want to teach me! I don't know what to do without you?

MARTHA.

I only said you might let him off.

MICHAEL.

Let him off. Don't I know what to do unless you teach me, you fool? Let him off! He may go, but I have a word to say to him to make him feel what he's done. So you listen, *mossieu,* to what I have to say. You may be in a nasty fix, but what you've done is disgusting, very disgusting. Another man would break your ribs for it, and then take you to the police; but I say, You've done a nasty thing: it could not be worse. But you are in such a bad way that I don't want to

harm you. Go, go, in God's name, and don't do such a thing again. (*Turning to his wife.*) And you wanted to teach me.

NEIGHBOUR.

You're wrong, Michael; you're wrong to encourage them.

MICHAEL.

(*Still holding the parcel.*) If I'm wrong, I'm wrong. It's my business. (*To his wife.*) You want to teach me. (*He pauses, looks at the parcel, and with a decisive movement gives it to the* TRAMP, *looking at his wife.*) Take this, and drink tea on your way. (*To the wife.*) You want to teach me. Go along, go along; it's no good talking about it.

TRAMP.

(*Takes the parcel.—A pause.*) You think I don't understand? (*His voice trembles.*) I quite understand. Had you beaten me like a dog it would have been easier. Do you think I don't know what I am? I am a rogue: I mean a degenerate. Forgive me, for Christ's sake. (*Sobs, throws the parcel on the table, and leaves the hut hurriedly.*)

MARTHA.

I'm glad he didn't take the tea, or we couldn't have made any.

MICHAEL.

(*To his wife.*) You wanted to teach me.

NEIGHBOUR.

Poor fellow! he burst into tears.

AKULINA.

He is a man, too.